

# After rains, aquifer restrictions are eased

By Liz Teitz  
STAFF WRITER

For the first time in nearly a year, the agency that manages the Edwards Aquifer is relaxing pumping restrictions due to improved water levels — but the groundwater system remains in drought conditions.

The Edwards Aquifer Authority said Tuesday that it is moving from Stage 4 restrictions, the second-most restrictive level, to Stage 3. That means aquifer users like the San Antonio Water System can now pump up to 65% of their permitted amounts.

More than 2 million people rely on water from the aquifer, a groundwater system that runs from west of San Antonio, below the city and along the west side of Interstate 35 toward Austin.

Stage 4 restrictions, which limit pumping to 60%, had been in place since May 29, 2025. Before that, the authority briefly went into Stage 5, the highest level of restriction, for the first time in its history because of low water levels.

The latest change means little for most residential and commercial water users, whose restrictions are set by utilities such as SAWS or New Braunfels Utilities. But the authority's change means those utilities can take slightly more water from the aquifer than they



Sam Owens/San Antonio Express-News

The water level of the Edwards Aquifer, which feeds the Comal River, above, and the San Marcos River has risen because of recent rainfall. The Edwards Aquifer Authority is relaxing pumping restrictions.

have for the past 11 months.

The stages are automatically triggered by water levels in a Bexar County monitoring well, called J-17, and by flows in the Comal and San Marcos

springs.

The water level in J-17 was measured at 635.4 feet above sea level on Tuesday, according to the utility. That's still more than 30 feet below the historical average for this

time of year, but it's more than 8 feet higher than the water level 10 days ago.

Flow at Comal Springs in New Braunfels has also improved to 116 cubic feet per second, up from 59 cfs 10 days ago. But like the

well levels, the springs are still far below normal: Average flow there for April is nearly 300 cfs.

The San Marcos Springs have remained steady recently and are still flowing at less than

half the average rate there.

The improved water levels in the Edwards Aquifer are thanks to recent rainfall, particularly in areas north and west of San Antonio in the aquifer's contributing and recharge zones, where fractures in the surface allow water to enter the system.

Comal County, which covers parts of both the contributing and recharge zones, received 4 inches to 6 inches of rain in the past 10 days, while Bandera County, which is entirely in the contributing zone, saw 2 inches to 6 inches, according to National Weather Service estimates.

But it will take much more rain to help the aquifer and other water sources recover from years of persistent drought.

The past four years of below-average rainfall have created a deficit of more than 40 inches in the San Antonio area and put increasing strain on water supplies.

Canyon Lake, a major reservoir in Comal County, is still just under 59% full. Its water level has risen less than 3 inches in the last week and is still 2 inches lower than one month ago, according to data from the Texas Water Development Board.

Medina Lake, west of San Antonio, has been in dire straits for years. It remains less than 4% full and about 5 inches lower than it was a month ago.

# Man gets 38 years in prison for fatal shooting of girlfriend

By Gabriella Ybarra  
STAFF WRITER

A San Antonio man was sentenced to prison after fatally shooting his girlfriend on the North

Side in 2023.

Donevyn Bowie, 25, on Monday was sentenced to 38 years in prison for the death of his girlfriend, Shamiah Allen. Before being sentenced, Bowie



Bowie

pleaded no contest.

Police arrested Bowie in December 2023 after

Bowie called 911 and admitted to shooting Allen.

When police arrived at a residence in the 3200 block of North Loop 1604 West, near Shavano Park, they found Allen dead.

Bowie then surrendered himself to the police.

According to the Bexar County District Attorney's Office, Bowie got into a heated argument with Allen over financial is-

sues. He then shot her twice in the head while Allen was in the bathtub, the DA's office said.

After the shooting, Bowie claimed that the shooting was accidental.

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