

## Droughts compared with Hurricanes and Floods in the United States

<b>Time</b>	<b>Drought</b>	<b>Flood</b>	<b>Hurricane</b>
Warning time	up to a year, but often none	from seconds to months	36 hours to months
Duration	months, years, decades	hours, weeks	minutes, weeks
Frequency	each year, some part of the United States has severe or extreme drought	a stream typically overflows 2 out of 3 years	1.6/year, all intensities; .1/5.75 years, class 4 & 5
<b>Fatalities</b>	<b>Drought</b>	<b>Flood</b>	<b>Hurricane</b>
Annual average	Drought is rarely a direct cause of death in the United States, although associated heat waves, dust, and stress all contribute to mortality.	94 (all floods); 136 (flash floods)	162
Worst recent event		48 died in the 1993 Mississippi Valley floods, 180 in the 1985 Puerto Rico flash floods	49-86 died in Hurricane Hugo in 1989
Worst recorded	unknown		6,000+ died in Galveston hurricane in 1990
<b>Costs and Losses</b>	<b>Drought</b>	<b>Flood</b>	<b>Hurricane</b>
Annual average	\$6-8 billion	\$2.41 billion	\$1.2-4.8 billion
Worst recent event	\$39-40 billion 1988-89	\$15-27.6 billion 1993	\$25-33.1 billion, Hurricane Andrew, 1993
Worst recorded	1930s or 1988-89		
<b>Spatial Extent</b>	<b>Drought</b>	<b>Flood</b>	<b>Hurricane</b>
Annual average	18.1% of the United States, at peak intensity	N/A	N/A
Worst recent event	36.3% of the United States, July 1988	Mississippi Valley floods of 1993	N/A
Worst recorded	65% of the United States, July 1934		N/A

For more complete information and references, please refer to the National Drought Mitigation Center's website: <http://drought.unl.edu/risk/us/compare.htm>

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