

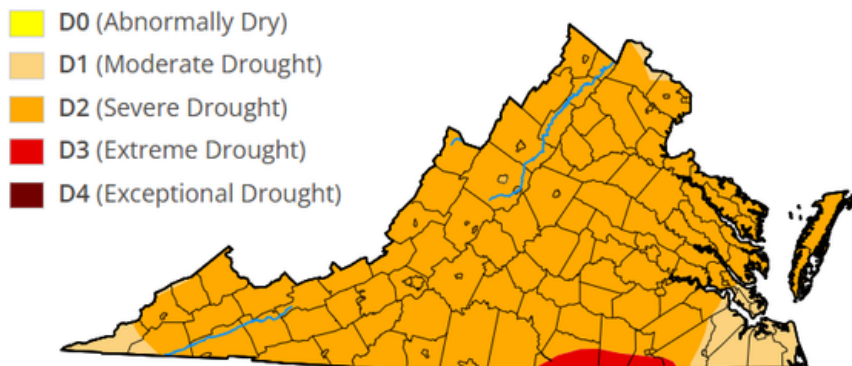
April 24, 2026

Key Takeaways

- Respiratory disease is minimal in Virginia. Gastrointestinal illness remains elevated. Rotavirus and common cold viruses are increasing nationally.
- Drought is affecting all of Virginia and much of the nation, increasing wildfire and smoke risk.
- Mortality risk from extreme temperatures varies widely by race in Virginia.
- The Governor's Office launched the Inaugural Regional Readiness Summits.

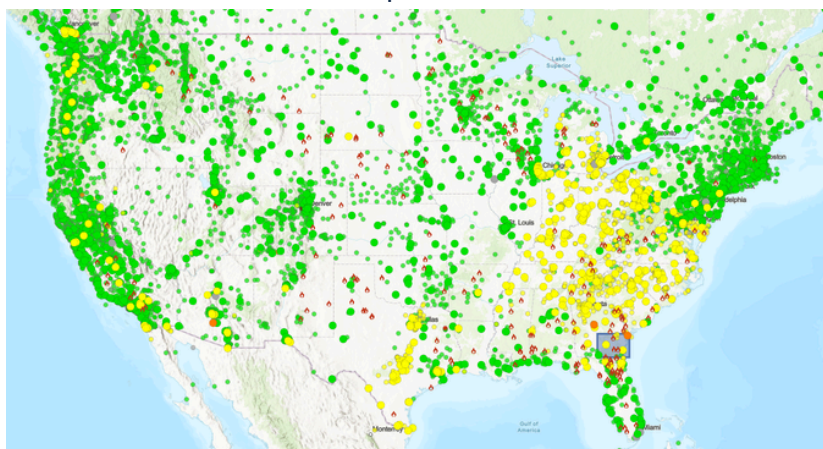
Key Figures

Virginia Drought Intensity
As of Tues Apr 21



All of Virginia is experiencing drought, with 94% of the state experiencing severe or extreme drought. Image Source: USDM

Smoke and Fire Map
Apr 23



Smoke from Southeast wildfires is affecting air quality in multiple states. Image source: AirNow

Measles

44

Measles cases confirmed nationally in the week ending Apr 23.

Drought

77%

Share of the continental US experiencing drought conditions.

100%

Share of Virginia experiencing drought conditions.

Key Dates

Apr 30

Virginia's spring fire season ends.

Apr 30

The King and Queen of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth Realms will visit Virginia.

Subscribe to receive this update in your inbox weekly.

Ongoing Monitored Situations

Measles

- The CDC reported **44 new measles cases** in the US over the past week, bringing the 2026 total to 1,792 cases across 36 US states. Canada reported 84 new cases last week. Mexico reported 551.
- Utah added **11 new cases** last week. Arizona added **9**. No other state added more than 6 cases. South Carolina added one case related to international travel. The state's upstate outbreak is poised to end officially on Sunday.
- **21 African countries** have declared a **measles outbreak**, more than for mpox or cholera. Almost 65,000 suspected cases have been reported, with 493 deaths - mostly in DR Congo. Low or delayed vaccination, often in the context of conflict, natural disaster, or anti-vaccine sentiment are driving the activity.
- A **measles outbreak in Israel** has generated **3,140 confirmed cases**. 60% of cases occurred in children age 1-4. The outbreak is occurring in ultra-Orthodox communities with low vaccination rates.

Mpox

- San Francisco reported its first case of **clade I mpox**. The patient reported close contact with someone who traveled internationally. Community spread of mpox clade I occurred in Los Angeles last fall.
- **125 suspected cases** have been reported in an **mpox outbreak in Pakistan**. 9 people have died, including at least 5 newborns in neonatal units. The outbreak is linked to infection control lapses in Pakistani hospitals.

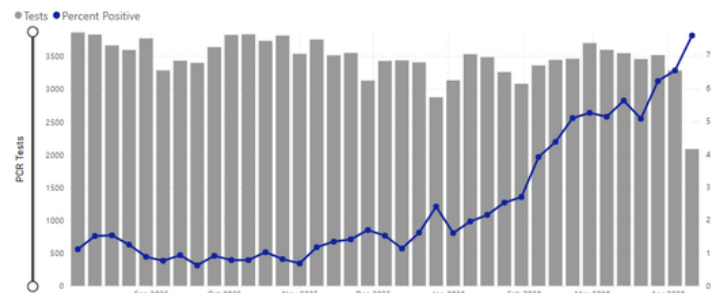
Other News

- **Climate-related disasters** were the main factor increasing **homelessness** in the US from 2019 to 2024. Eviction moratoria were the main protective factor. Study authors note that individuals in low income households are more likely to live in areas and homes more susceptible to climate-related disasters.
- A **chemical accident** near **Charleston, West Virginia** killed two people. 30 people were transported to area hospitals, including 7 emergency responders. The 'violent' chemical reaction produced toxic hydrogen sulfide. A shelter-in-place order was in effect for five hours but local air and water quality were not affected.

Seasonal Illness

- In Virginia, overall respiratory activity is **minimal and trending down**, accounting for 9.5% of ED visits. Flu activity continues to trend down. COVID-19 and RSV activity are both low and stable. Nationally, respiratory illness activity is **very low**. However, test positivity for common cold viruses (RV/EV and HMPV) is increasing.
- Federal vaccine guidance is uncertain for the **2026-2027 respiratory disease season**. The CDC's ACIP panel is in limbo, raising questions about recommendations for flu and COVID vaccines. Three newly-approved RSV vaccines are also awaiting recommendations. Meanwhile, states and professional organizations continue to take actions to protect access and reduce confusion.
- Gastrointestinal illness is above threshold in Virginia, accounting for 10.7% of ED visits, up from 10.6% last week. GI illness is above threshold in Central, Eastern and Northern Virginia.

Rotavirus weekly test and percent positivity
CDC NREVSS - National



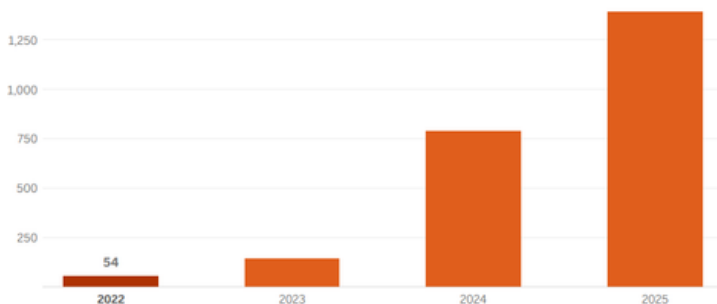
Nationally, norovirus and rotavirus test positivity remains elevated. Rotavirus positivity had a distinct upward trend over the past few of weeks.

Image Source: [CDC](#)

Other News

- **Mar 2026 was the driest March in the continental US since 1895.** It was the 3rd driest month on record, trailing only July and August during the 1934 dust bowl.
- **Wildfires in Georgia and Florida are forcing evacuations.** Over 50 homes have been destroyed. The fires are affecting air quality, including in major cities. The area is suffering from 'exceptional' drought, causing fires to spread rapidly. Drought also contributed to fast moving fires in Suffolk, Virginia.
- **Charlottesville and Roanoke Virginia ranked as 2 of the 30 cleanest US cities by ozone air pollution in 2026.** No Virginia cities ranked as cleanest by acute or year-round particle pollution. Additionally, no Virginia cities ranked among the 30 most polluted in any category.

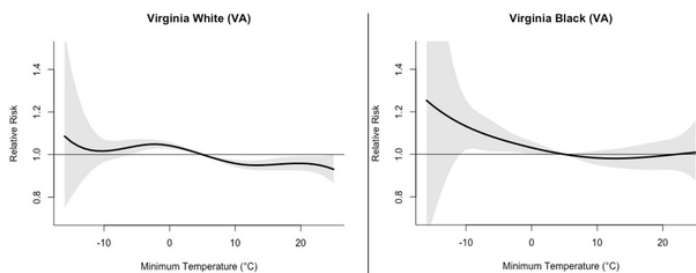
Carfentanil Seizures, US



Carfentanil, a powerful synthetic opioid, is increasingly appearing in the US. Carfentanil is 100 times stronger than fentanyl, and 10,000 times more potent than morphine. It is often used to strengthen fentanyl, which is weaker following a crackdown on precursors. Image Source: AP

- **Experts warn of threats to medical supply chains related to the Mideast conflict.** Shortages affecting Asia are beginning to be felt in the West. Longer-term, impacts are unpredictable as petrochemical shortages affect a broad range of products, from needles to pharmaceuticals. Commercial flight cuts may impact time- and temperature-sensitive products.

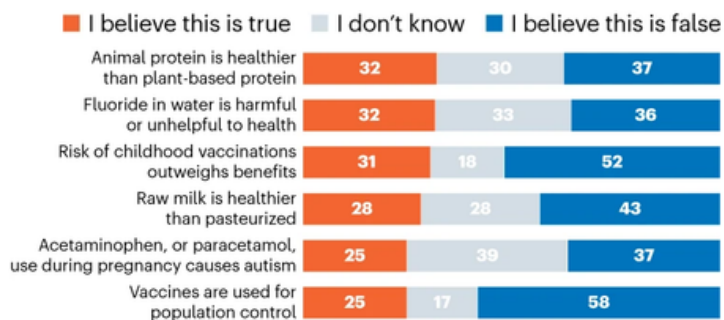
Mortality Risk by Race & Temperature Virginia



In Virginia, health risks from extreme temperatures vary by race. Black Virginians face 3x higher mortality risk during extreme cold events compared to White Virginians, and had elevated risk during extreme heat. White Virginians' mortality risk decreased during extreme heat events compared to moderate temperatures. Image Source: AGU

- **Severe weather spawned at least 66 tornados in the Midwest,** damaging scores of homes and businesses. Power outages affected tens of thousands of customers. Meanwhile, Michigan is suffering from widespread flooding created by highly monthly rain totals and spring snowmelt.
- **The Governor's Office launched the Inaugural Regional Readiness Summits in Southwest Virginia.** The summits will support regional cross-sector collaborations to improve readiness, response and recovery for crisis incidents.

Misinformation Acceptance



Over two-thirds of persons across 16 countries believe at least one false or dubious health claim according to a recent survey. In the US, 61% of respondents believed at least one such claim. Image Source: Nature.