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Nevada: Overview

Everything in the main manual and the skill guides applies in Nevada exactly as written. What's different here is the specific hazard profile and the state, local, and legal context around it. This page is the starting point; the other three pages under Nevada go deeper on laws, local resources, and the data behind the risks named here.

Las Vegas heat: a death toll rising fast in the opposite direction from Phoenix's

Clark County recorded 526 heat-related deaths in 2024, up from 294 the year before, a 78% increase in a single year, during the same period Maricopa County, Arizona's own heat death count was actually declining. The 2024 summer was the hottest on record in Las Vegas, with 112 days above 100°F, breaking a record set in 1947, and a peak temperature of 120°F on July 7. See the Risks page for the full comparison with Arizona's own heat-death data.

Reno: real earthquake risk most people don't expect from Nevada

Nevada's northwestern corner sits within the Walker Lane Belt, a major tectonic shear zone, and the Reno-Carson City-Tahoe corridor carries a 60-75% chance of a damaging magnitude 6+ earthquake within 30 miles of any point in the corridor over the next 50 years, according to regional seismic hazard assessments, comparable to or exceeding some of the earthquake probability figures covered on California's page. The Mount Rose and Pyramid Lake fault zones near Reno are both capable of producing earthquakes above magnitude 7.

What this means for how you use the rest of this manual

The manual's Tier structure and the skill guides apply without modification. What's different in Nevada: heat safety needs to be a genuine year-round Tier 1 priority in the southern part of the state, on the same level this manual gives it in Arizona, and Reno-area households should treat earthquake preparedness, secured furniture, a practiced drop-cover-hold plan, water and supplies independent of undamaged infrastructure, as a real priority despite Nevada's reputation as simply a desert state.

Sources

- Clark County heat-related death statistics: Las Vegas Sun; Southern Nevada Health District
- Reno-area seismic hazard and fault data: Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology; ShakeOut Nevada

Nevada: Laws & Legal Considerations

Rainwater harvesting: recently relaxed from a near-total historical restriction

Like Colorado, Nevada’s strict prior appropriation doctrine historically treated rainwater as already claimed water, making collection illegal without a state water right permit until relatively recent legislative changes.

Rule	Nevada
Historical rule	Collecting rainwater required a water right permit from the State Engineer, with no exception for ordinary residential use
2011 change (AB138)	Legalized capturing rooftop rainwater from a single-family dwelling for non-potable domestic use without a water right, plus wildlife guzzler collection, provided no conflict with existing water rights
2017 change (NB74)	Allowed rainwater collected under a granted water right to be exempt from the "use it or lose it" forfeiture doctrine, with some conditions still attached

A genuine parallel to Colorado, covered elsewhere on this site

Nevada and Colorado are the two states covered on this site where rainwater harvesting was historically treated as illegal by default under strict prior appropriation, rather than simply permitted or lightly regulated. Both states have since carved out targeted residential exceptions rather than fully legalizing the practice outright.

Where to find it: the Nevada Division of Water Resources (water.nv.gov) administers water rights and rainwater exceptions.

Water rights: prior appropriation for both surface water and groundwater

Nevada applies prior appropriation doctrine comprehensively, to groundwater as well as surface water, a more thorough application of the doctrine than some other prior-appropriation states covered on this site.

Concept	How it works in Nevada
Governing principle	"First in time, first in right" for both surface water and groundwater
Administering authority	The State Engineer, within the Division of Water Resources
Recent development	A 2024 "superbasin" ruling addressed how groundwater rights are managed across combined, interconnected basins, an evolving area of Nevada water law

Where to find it: the Nevada Division of Water Resources administers all water rights statewide.

Concealed carry: shall-issue, not permitless

Unlike neighboring Arizona and Utah, Nevada has not adopted permitless carry.

Requirement	Detail
Standard	A Concealed Firearm Permit (CFP) is required to carry concealed at all; carrying without one is a felony, not a misdemeanor
Minimum age	21
Training required	At least 8 hours, including both classroom instruction and live-fire range time
Issuing authority	The sheriff of the applicant's county (non-residents may apply through any Nevada county sheriff)
Validity	5 years, valid statewide

Sources

- Nevada rainwater harvesting law history and AB138/NB74 changes: State legislative water law overview
- Nevada prior appropriation and 2024 superbasin ruling: Nevada Water Rights; Natural Resources Law Network
- Nevada Concealed Firearm Permit requirements: LVMPD; Alien Gear Holsters

Nevada: Local Resources

Nevada OEM

The Nevada Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security runs the state's preparedness portfolio without one single branded consumer campaign name, similar to the approach on a few other states' pages covered on this site.

A notably longer self-sufficiency target

Nevada OEM frames household preparedness around planning for 30 days of self-sufficiency, longer than the 72-hour to 2-week targets most other states' campaigns cite, a meaningful difference worth building toward specifically if you're following Nevada's own guidance rather than a generic national standard.

Where to find it: oem.nv.gov.

University of Nevada, Reno Extension: Nevada's version of the other states' land-grant Extension programs

UNR Extension runs the same category of program as every other state covered on this site, with a distinctive two-course prerequisite structure.

- **Master Gardeners of Nevada:** requires completing the Home Horticulture Certificate Program first (\$275), then the Master Gardener Training Program itself (\$25), an interview, background check, and volunteer paperwork. The internship year requires 15 continuing-education hours and 35 volunteer hours; ongoing certification requires 10 continuing-education hours and 20 volunteer hours annually.

Where to find it: extension.unr.edu/master-gardeners lists county programs, including Clark and Douglas counties.

CERT: Southern Nevada's program, open to residents as young as 16

Southern Nevada CERT, covering the Las Vegas Valley, is free and open to residents starting at age 16, younger than the 18+ minimum most other states' CERT programs covered on this site use.

Where to find it: lasvegasnevada.gov; northern Nevada residents can check with their county emergency management office for a local program.

Sources

- Nevada OEM preparedness portfolio and 30-day framing: Nevada OEM
- UNR Extension Master Gardener Program structure and requirements: UNR Extension
- Southern Nevada CERT program and minimum age: City of Las Vegas

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Nevada: Risks & Trends

Same standard as every other page on this site: every figure below is independently sourced, and figures that vary across sources, or measure genuinely different things, are flagged as such rather than collapsed into one number that looks more precise than the underlying data actually supports.

Clark County heat deaths: rising fast while Phoenix’s fall

Metric	Figure
2023 heat-related deaths	294
2024 heat-related deaths	526 (preliminary; historically these figures are later revised upward as investigations conclude)
Year-over-year increase	~78%
Days above 100°F, 2024	112, breaking the previous record of 100 days set in 1947
Peak temperature (July 7, 2024)	120°F
July 2024 average temperature vs. normal	+6.7°F

A direct comparison worth making explicit

Clark County’s 526 reported 2024 heat deaths remain below Maricopa County, Arizona’s 602 for the same year, figures covered on Arizona’s page, but the two counties’ trajectories are moving in opposite directions: Maricopa’s toll fell from a record 645 in 2023 to 602 in 2024, while Clark County’s rose 78% over the same one-year span, from 294 to 526. If both trends continued, Las Vegas’s heat death toll could approach or exceed Phoenix’s within a few years, though that’s a projection, not a confirmed figure.

Reno-area earthquake probability: a standing risk

Metric	Figure
50-year chance of a damaging M6+ earthquake within 30 mi of the Reno-Carson City-Tahoe corridor	60-75%
30-year chance of M6.7+ within 100 km of Reno	~30%
Largest credible earthquake, Mount Rose Fault Zone (8 km from downtown Reno)	M7.0
Largest credible earthquake, Pyramid Lake Fault	M7.5
Historical significant earthquakes	1860 Reno (M6.5); 1868/1869 Virginia City (M6.0/M6.4); 1887 Carson City (M6.5); 1914 Reno (M6.4); 2008 Reno (M5.1)

Reno sits within the Walker Lane Belt, a major tectonic shear zone accommodating 15-25% of the total relative movement between the Pacific and North American plates, which is why this specific corridor carries earthquake probability figures more typical of California than of the broader Great Basin region Nevada is usually associated with.

What these two have in common

Las Vegas’s heat risk and Reno’s earthquake risk are geographically opposite ends of the state and mechanically unrelated, but both illustrate the same point about Nevada specifically: its dominant public image, a dry desert state, undersells two genuinely severe risks that don’t fit that image, extreme urban heat mortality and significant seismic hazard.

Sources

- Clark County heat death statistics: Las Vegas Sun; KTNV
- Reno-area seismic hazard data: Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology; ShakeOut Nevada