



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

OPERATIONS UPDATE

July 11, 2016

SFWMD Continues Actions to Address Blue-Green Algae

Since Gov. Rick Scott declared a state of emergency because of blue-green algal blooms in South Florida waterways, the South Florida Water Management District has been pursuing actions to address the impact of the blooms. These actions include storing additional water in the Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes north of Lake Okeechobee and Florida Power and Light Co. agreeing to the use of their cooling pond at the Martin Clean Energy Center for additional storage. The District is also timing releases based on tides into the West Palm Beach (C-51) Canal to give the Lake Worth Lagoon time to naturally dissipate any algae that may be contained in those releases.

The District is also implementing the Governor's executive order by accelerating the use of private properties to store additional water. The Florida Legislature and Gov. Scott appropriated approximately \$47.8 million for that purpose last session.

A good example of a private landowner stepping forward to help with the state of emergency is Consolidated Citrus Limited Partnership, which has volunteered the use of its 1,700-acre Sunrise Grove property near the C-23 Canal in Martin County. Today, Consolidated Citrus began pumping in additional local stormwater that will be stored in the property's vast network of ditches. This will allow the storage of up to 1,000 acre-feet of water, keeping it out of the St. Lucie Estuary.

If drier conditions persist, Lake Okeechobee levels will continue to drop this week. Furthermore, the increased demand for water supply will allow for additional discharges of water. As of today, Lake Okeechobee's water level stands at 14.82 feet. A week ago the water level was more than an inch higher at 14.94 feet.

The District will continue to explore practical operational steps that can be taken to address the algal blooms. In addition, the District is continuing to sample waterways as it has been doing and is coordinating with other state agencies that are responsible for algae response.

- For more information on the District's responses to blue-green algae and facts about algae please visit the District's website at <http://sfwmd.link/AlgaeResponse>.
- For information on the Department of Environmental Protections response to blue-green algae visit the DEP's website at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/bgalgae/index.htm>.

- For more information about blue-green algae visit the Florida Department of Health's website at http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/aquatic-toxins/_documents/cyano-faqs-pio.pdf.

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The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

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