

Tropical Storm Isaac

Information for Western Communities in Palm Beach County

UPDATED: September 4, 2012

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) continues to take emergency actions to help reduce flooding from Tropical Storm Isaac and is operating the regional flood control system at full capacity in the most heavily impacted areas. Emergency orders have been issued and remain in place to maximize system operations and divert water to alleviate local flooding, which resulted from more than a foot of rain from the storm.

IMPORTANT: Questions or concerns regarding health-related issues, including septic tanks and well sanitation and testing, should be directed to the Palm Beach County Health Department. The number is (561) 840-4500. The Palm Beach County EOC remains activated for post-storm recovery. That number is (561) 712-6428.

What actions have been taken to drain flood waters from the most heavily impacted areas?

- Through Friday, August 31, the SFWMD moved more than 25 billion gallons of water in the C-51 Basin, which was inundated with more than a foot of rainfall. Since the storm onslaught, the SFWMD regional system has been operating at its full capacity to move flood waters flowing into the L-8 and C-51 canals out to tide, to the Water Conservation Areas and into Lake Okeechobee.
- As additional capacity becomes available in the C-51 canal, the District is moving water from the L-8 canal south into the C-51. The C-51 canal is the major conduit for moving water to tide from inland areas of Palm Beach County.
- The District is also using the L-8 canal to divert some flood waters north into Lake Okeechobee, which is currently at a lower level than the canal level.
- Using all available storage capacity in the L-8 reservoir, water is moving from the L-8 canal into the reservoir at 550 cubic feet per second, via fully opened existing culvert connections. An estimated 3,200 acre-feet of water has been diverted to the reservoir.

How are governments and communities working together to help alleviate flooding?

- District water managers continue to work with Palm Beach County EOC, local drainage districts and local communities to bring as much flow as possible from the impacted parts of the system into the regional canals.
- In coordination with the **Indian Trail Improvement District** (561-793-0874), increased discharges are being made to the L-8 and C-51 canals to help drain flood waters. The ITID is responsible for operating the secondary water control system in the Acreage, which discharges into the SFWMD's regional primary system of canals.
- Since August 28, the ITID has been discharging flood waters into the L-8 and C-51 canals, which are a part of the SFWMD regional system. As regional capacity has become available in the C-51 canal, discharges from the Acreage south for discharge to tide have been ramped up. Water discharging from the ITID to the C-51 canal is up to 1,000 cubic feet per second – four times the ITID's regular discharge rate.

- In coordination with the City of West Palm Beach, the Indian Trail Improvement District also installed a temporary pump to divert flood water into the city's M canal and then into the Grassy Waters Preserve. Indian Trail has also installed two additional temporary pumps at its pump station in the Acreage to increase discharge to the south to the C-51 canal.
- Nine temporary pumps deployed and installed by the SFWMD at two separate locations adjacent to the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area are operating to divert water into the C-18 and L-8 canals. This is improving drainage in the western communities by moving water into Lake Okeechobee and to tide. Contrary to rumors, there is no breach in the levee on the southern end of the Corbett Area. Although the levee is not owned, and therefore not maintained, by the SFWMD, the District is assisting by inspecting and repairing areas of sloughing (erosion) identified along the levee during post-storm inspections. The District had stockpiled dirt and rocks adjacent to the Corbett property to be available for repairs, if needed.
- Two temporary pumps have been installed by the SFWMD in the **Deer Run** community to assist this community in moving flood waters into the L-8 canal for discharge to Lake Okeechobee. Deer Run is not a part of the District's primary system and is not served by a local drainage district. A privately owned permanent pump is also in place, and the community is operating two additional temporary pumps.
- In the eastern C-51 basin, the **Palm Beach Plantation** residential development contracted with a private business to install temporary pumps to help move neighborhood floodwaters. Water levels dropped, and all roads in the community are now reported to be dried. The temporary pumps continue operating to gain storage capacity in the stormwater ponds in the event of additional rainfall.

What other operational actions are helping the C-51 basin?

- The C-51 basin received a historic amount of rainfall over a short period of time.
- The District continues to move the maximum flow for current conditions at its structures S319, S155A and S155. Water levels at S155A and S155 have reached stable, wet season conditions, meaning the C-51 should be able to take some additional flows.
- To the west, District pump stations G370, G372, S5A, S6, S7 and S8 continue pumping around the clock, and as a result, L-8 canal water levels have receded significantly.
- As of this morning (September 4), the water level at the southeast end of the L-8 canal is 15.57 feet NGVD, a drop of about 2.5 feet since Friday afternoon. Structure S5AE remains open, passing about 740 cubic feet per second and helping alleviate some of the elevated water levels in the L-8 canal.
- Culvert 10A in the northwest end of the L-8 canal is discharging close to 1,100 cubic feet per second into Lake Okeechobee.
- Lake Okeechobee's level continues to rise roughly an inch per day, with today's reading at 14.24 feet NGVD.