

Tropical Storm Isaac
Information for Western Communities in Palm Beach County
September 1, 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.

What actions are being taken to drain flood waters from the most heavily impacted areas within the Indian Trail Improvement District?

- 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.
- Eight temporary pumps deployed and installed by the District 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 **Acreage** by moving water into Lake Okeechobee and to tide.
- In coordination with the City of West Palm Beach, the Indian Trail Improvement District 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.

Is the Indian Trail Improvement District (ITID) being allowed to drain water?

- Absolutely. 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. For the past 4 days, the ITID has been discharging flood waters into the L-8 and C-51 canals, which are a part of the SFWMD regional system.
- Rumors and media reports that the SFWMD is preventing ITID from fully utilizing its water control system and temporary pumping facilities to drain TS Isaac's flood waters are not true.
- 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 moving at about 1,000 cubic feet per second is now discharging from the ITID to the C-51 canal - this is four times the ITID's regular discharge rate. The temporary pumps installed by the District at ITID's impoundment area are also maximizing discharges to the L-8 canal.

What additional steps are being taken in the C-51 basin?

- Since the onslaught of Tropical Storm Isaac, the SFWMD has moved more than 25 billion gallons of water in the C-51 Basin, which was inundated with more than a foot of rainfall. 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.
- The District is 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 also moving from the L-8 canal into the reservoir at 750 cubic feet per second, via fully opened existing culvert connections. More than 2,400 acre-feet of water has been diverted to the reservoir so far.
- 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.
- Two temporary pumps have been installed by the District 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 a temporary pump.
- 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 operational actions are helping the C-51 basin?

- 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 been receding, making room for some additional capacity in C-51 West basin.
- Operations Control staff continues to work with Palm Beach County EOC, Indian Trail Improvement District (ITID) and local communities to bring as much flow as possible from these parts of the system into the C-51.
- 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 are slowly receding.
- As of Saturday, the water level at the southeast end of the L-8 canal is 17.83 feet NGVD, a drop of about 0.5 feet since yesterday afternoon. Structure S5AE remains open, passing about 750 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 1,500 cubic feet per second into Lake Okeechobee.
- Excess water in the L-8 canal is also being directed into the L-8 Reservoir at maximum inflow capacity.

- Lake Okeechobee's level continues to rise, with the District-estimated average mid-day on Saturday at above 14 feet NGVD.

Is there a breach in the Corbett levee?

- No. There is no breach in the levee on the southern end of the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area. Rumors that a breach has occurred are not true.
- Following the large amount of rainfall from Tropical Storm Isaac, which raised water levels in the area, the District surveyed flooding issues in The Acreage.
- To assist our partners, we also performed inspections on the levee. These inspections confirm that the structural integrity of the levee has not been compromised.
- The District has installed large temporary pumps on the east and west sides of Corbett to address flooding in The Acreage and also to help equalize water levels in the Wildlife Management Area. This is being accomplished by pumping water into the L-8 and C-18 canals.
- In addition, the FWC has been degrading roads within Corbett to help convey overland flow in the area toward our temporary pumps. Efforts to lower water levels using the temporary pumps are expected to be achieved without incident.
- Although the levee is not owned, and therefore not maintained, by the SFWMD, the District is assisting by 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. This is a proactive measure widely used by operators of levees and dams nationwide.
- As residents have observed, stormwater runoff from Corbett is making its way across the road that borders the Wildlife Management Area on the east. This is not a breach. The water makes its way east to the Mecca Farms property, where a series of former citrus canals and structures direct it north to the C-18 canal and away from The Acreage. The water flowing over the road is not considered a problem but just another avenue to lower the water levels in the Wildlife Management Area.

Why is the C-51 canal still high?

- The C-51 basin received a historic amount of rainfall over a short period of time. Preliminary estimates indicate that the C-51 Basin, which encompasses central Palm Beach County, experienced a 1-in-100-year rainfall event from Tropical Storm Isaac.
- Based on radar rainfall estimates, up to 14.85 inches of rain fell in the C-51 Basin for the period from August 25 at 7:30 a.m. to August 28 at 7:30 a.m. This is in addition to the rainfall received before the onset of the storm that brought the estimated seven-day total for the basin to 17 inches.
- Water levels are beginning to gradually decline in the C-51 canal, which moves water to tide from inland areas of Palm Beach County. Since Monday, water managers have been maximizing discharge from both the east and west ends of the C-51.
- The District continues coordinating with local drainage districts and municipalities to accept additional flows into our regional canals from the secondary drainage systems, which are still experiencing flooding conditions.