



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

June 12, 2009

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Recent Rains Allow for 2 Days of Lawn Watering in South Miami-Dade, Monroe Counties

SFWMD Governing Board eases other restrictions, but water conservation still remains critical to protect the public water supply

West Palm Beach, FL – With significant wet season rains recharging water levels in the Biscayne Aquifer, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Governing Board on Thursday eased landscape irrigation restrictions in South Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, allowing lawn watering two days a week. Because of dry conditions, the region had been under emergency one-day-a-week landscape irrigation restrictions since May 7.

The Governing Board also rescinded emergency restrictions on nurseries, agriculture and golf courses in the two counties and took action to ease restrictions in the following areas:

- **Southern Lehigh Acres, Gateway and Corkscrew Areas:** Lawn watering is again allowed two days a week between 12 a.m. and 10 a.m. and/or 4 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. Lee County residents should follow the county's year-round ordinance that limits watering to two days a week between 12 a.m. and 9 a.m. and/or 5 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. Emergency restrictions on nurseries, agriculture and golf courses in these three areas were also lifted.

In addition, the Governing Board concurred with the District executive director's decision to rescind the order limiting withdrawals made by diversion and impoundment permit holders and specified agricultural permit holders from Water Conservation Areas 1 and 2 and regional canals in Broward and Palm Beach counties.

The actions take effect on June 18 and came as District meteorologists reported the wettest May ever recorded, with an average of 9.04 inches of rain falling across the 16-county region, surpassing the previous record of 8.95 inches set in 1934. The wettest

May on record was preceded by six months of record drought, with just 4.47 inches of rain recorded.

“Wise water use and conservation remain critical given Florida's weather extremes and the challenge of balancing our water supply and flood control needs with protecting the health of our natural systems,” said SFWMD Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle. “Water managers must look ahead to and plan for the next dry season and beyond to protect regional water resources.”

While the regional system has begun recharging, it is still in a recovery mode from the drought with regional storage areas at the low part of their regulation schedules. The water level in Lake Okeechobee, which serves as a regional backup water supply for 5 million Floridians, has risen with recent rainfall, but at 11.80 feet NGVD on Friday, stands approximately 1.36 feet below its historic average for this time of year. Most of the 16-county region remains under two-day-a-week landscape irrigation restrictions.

The SFWMD is closely monitoring water levels across the region and is urging residents and businesses to conserve water and follow landscape irrigation restrictions to stretch available supplies. More information about irrigation limits by area is available on the District's [water restrictions](#) Web site. For water saving tips, visit www.savewaterfl.com.

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About the South Florida Water Management District – [Celebrating 60 Years \(1949-2009\)](#)

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.