



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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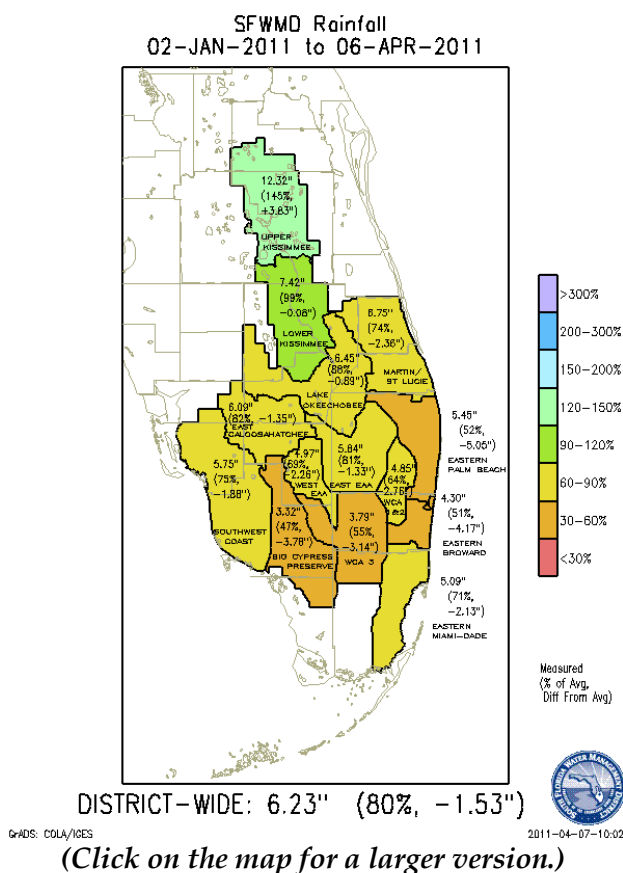
South Florida Water Management District

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Rainfall Remains Below Average Into 2011 *District actions focus on protecting water resources*



West Palm Beach, FL — Although recent rains have slowed the decline of regional water levels, year-to-date rainfall in South Florida remains below average, and much of the region is still experiencing extreme drought conditions.

"While drier-than-normal conditions are expected to continue, we have been fortunate to receive some recent rainfall to recharge the system," said Tommy Strowd, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Deputy Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance. "It's not enough to erase drought conditions, but the rain, coupled

with conservation efforts, should help see the region through to the expected June start of the wet season.”

With average rainfall for March, South Florida for the year to date has experienced 80 percent of its historical rainfall for the January 1 – April 6 period this year, representing a deficit of 1.53 inches. Eastern Palm Beach and Broward counties recorded the largest rainfall deficits in the region at 5.05 inches and 4.17 inches, respectively. The Big Cypress Basin and Water Conservation Area 3 in Broward and Miami-Dade counties experienced the next largest deficits.

The Upper Kissimmee Basin has been the only area in the District to see above average rainfall in 2011, with 12.32 inches year-to-date, representing 3.83 inches above the historic average for this time period. The Lower Kissimmee Basin received near-normal rainfall for the year so far.

Lake Okeechobee stood at 11.57 feet on Thursday, which is more than three feet below its level a year ago and more than two feet below its historical average for this time of year. The lake also remained in its water shortage management band, meaning mandatory cutbacks for permitted water users in the immediate area.

The National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center is calling for below-normal precipitation to last through May. This week, Colorado State University storm forecasters issued a report calling for 16 named storms, nine hurricanes and five major hurricanes. The report also forecast a 48 percent probability for a least one major storm – category 3, 4 or 5 – to make landfall on the U.S. East Coast, including Florida.

Following the driest October-to-February period in 80 years, all of South Florida remains in a water shortage that requires residents to follow landscape irrigation rules limiting watering to two days per week. Agricultural and other large water users are also following mandatory cutbacks to protect regional water resources.

Links to information about irrigation limits by area, current conditions and water-savings tips are available at www.sfwmd.gov/waterwatch.

Water Shortage Orders:

- [Two-Day Landscape Irrigation and Golf Course Order](#)
- [Lake Okeechobee Service Area Order](#)
- [Broward and Palm Beach Order](#)
- [Bypass Structure Order](#)
- [South Dade Order](#)



More information is available at:

- [Water Shortage Fact Sheets](#)
- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [National Weather Service Dry Season Forecast](#)

- [Climate Prediction Center FAQ on La Niña](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Precipitation Forecast](#)

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About the South Florida Water Management District

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.