



NEWS RELEASE

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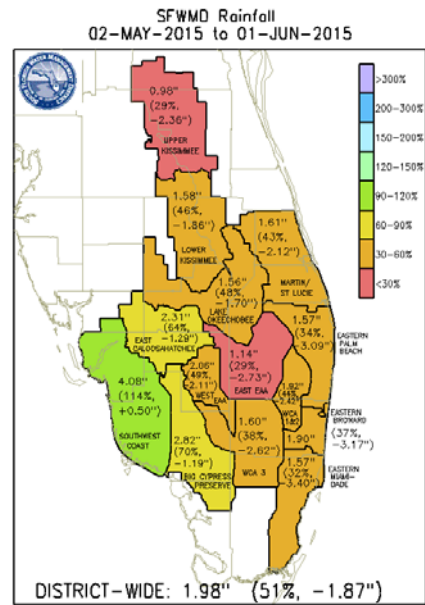
South Florida Water Management District

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Below-Average Rainfall Marks the Month of May *Demand for water supply is picking up*



West Palm Beach, FL – May rainfall was sparse across most of South Florida, meteorologists at the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) reported today.

SFWMD meteorologists believe an atypical weather pattern probably associated with El Niño inhibited the sea-breeze cycle in May from producing normal widespread rainfall across South Florida.

A total of only 1.98 inches of rain fell across the 16 counties in the District in May, representing 51 percent of average, or 1.87 inches below average. It was the driest May since 2008.

Despite being the driest area of the District in May, Upper Kissimmee basin water levels remained near normal because it was one of the wettest areas of the District during the

dry season. The upper basin received only 0.98 inches of rain, representing 29 percent of average, or 2.36 inches below average.

This lull in rainfall helped slow the flow of water into Lake Okeechobee, which had experienced high water levels in recent months.

The lake stood at 12.65 feet NGVD today. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which manages the lake, federal water managers prefer to maintain water levels between 12.5 feet and 15.5 feet to help balance competing demands such as public safety, water supply and environmental health.

Most other areas of the District were also drying out in May, with rainfall up to 3.40 inches below average in eastern Miami-Dade County.

The Southwest Coast was the only basin to receive above-average rainfall in May, with 4.08 inches of rain, representing 114 percent of average, or 0.50 inches above-average. The same weather pattern that inhibited widespread rainfall likely steered more rainfall to this area for the month.

South Florida Wet Season Facts

On average, South Florida's wet season begins around May 20 and ends around October 13, lasting for about 21 weeks.

- Typically, about two-thirds of annual rains fall during the wet season, or approximately 35 inches out of 52 inches.
- Since 1932, virtually all wet seasons have produced 2 to 4 feet of rainfall.
- June is usually South Florida's wettest month.
- The wet season has three general phases:
 - Memorial Day weekend through July 4 weekend, which are typically the wettest six weeks of the year.
 - Early July through mid-August, which are hotter and often drier.
 - Late August through October, which are characterized by highly variable rainfall mainly due to tropical activity and cold fronts.

More information is available at:

- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Precipitation Forecast](#)
- Interactive "Moving Water South" map: www.sfwmd.gov/movingwatersouth

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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.