



NEWS RELEASE

July 14, 2015

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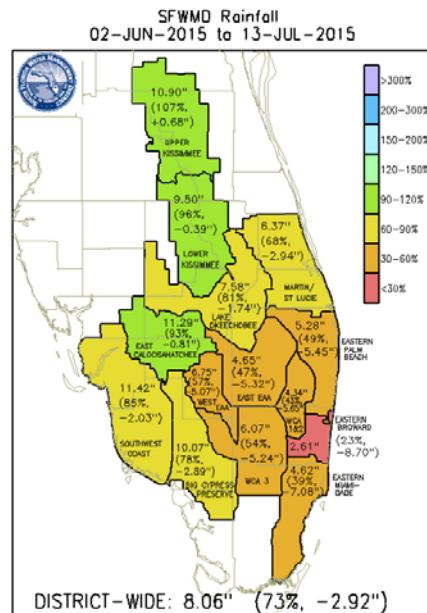
South Florida Water Management District

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SFWMD Water Managers Closely Monitoring Dry Conditions *Water conservation remains crucial to protect regional water resources*



(Click on map for larger version)

West Palm Beach, FL – With water levels continuing to fall in most areas, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has stepped up planning to manage worsening drought conditions.

“We are proactively reviewing procedures should parts of the region continue to experience prolonged drought conditions,” said Jeff Kivett, SFWMD Director of the Operations, Engineering and Construction Division. “For the public, following current water conservation measures will help protect South Florida’s water supply.”

Planning efforts include:

- Assembling SFWMD teams with specialized expertise in drought management
- Increasing review of salinity levels in coastal monitor wells and of utility data

- Enhancing outreach to communicate current water conservation measures, including year-round landscape irrigation measures that have been in place in South Florida for several years.

Watering rules by county are available at: www.sfwmd.gov/2days. There is no change in the rules at this time.

Current Conditions

South Florida's wet season has produced only 73 percent of average District-wide rainfall to date. This represents a 2.92 inch deficit across 16 counties.

Miami-Dade and Broward counties experienced the largest rainfall deficits in South Florida. Broward County received only 2.61 inches of rain, representing 23 percent of average, or a deficit of 8.70 inches. Miami-Dade received only 4.62 inches of rain, representing 39 percent of average, or a deficit of 7.08 inches.

As a result, parts of the east coast are listed by the U.S. Drought Monitor as being in "extreme drought" conditions.

Lake Okeechobee stood at 12.05 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 NGVD to help balance competing demands such as public safety, water supply and environmental health.

Rainfall in the Kissimmee region has kept water flowing to the lake, and rainfall in the East Caloosahatchee Basin and Southwest Coast has helped prevent drought conditions there to date.

Water Conservation is a Year-Round Ethic

Water conservation is essential year-round for addressing the impacts of weather extremes and growing demands on a limited water supply needed by South Florida's 8.1 million residents, economy and environment.

Water conservation can be practiced indoors and outside. Examples include installing low-flow aerators on faucets, installing low-flow household appliances and watering the lawn based on its actual needs.

When water shortage orders are not in place, the District has put in place year-round water conservation measures that target outdoor irrigation, which accounts for up to half of the water used per person per day in South Florida.

Basic water conservation practices include:

- Replacing aerators in kitchen and bathroom sinks with models rated for 1.5 gallons per minute or less

- Watering the lawn based on its actual needs and following the District's year-round landscape irrigation water conservation measures and/or local ordinances
- Installing high-efficiency (EPA ENERGY STAR labeled) appliances, such as a clothes and dishwashers
- Installing high-efficiency (EPA ENERGY STAR labeled) water fixtures, such as toilets and showerheads

More information is available at:

- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [U.S. Drought Monitor Florida](#)
- [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.