



# NEWS RELEASE

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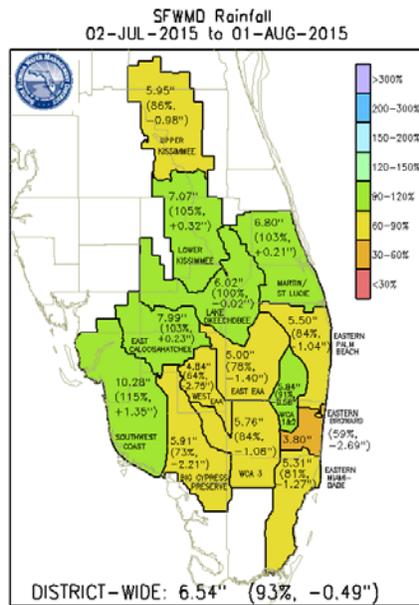
South Florida Water Management District

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## July Rainfall Provides Short-Term Relief *Deficits and drought conditions remain in some areas*



*(Click on map for larger version)*

**West Palm Beach, FL** — Rainfall picked up across South Florida in late July, providing relief to areas that remain in drought conditions but leaving long-term deficits in several locations, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) reported today.

“Recent rain helped improve groundwater levels, but portions of the District are still experiencing multi-month deficits,” said Jeff Kivett, SFWMD Director of Operations, Engineering and Construction. “Water conservation remains one of the best ways to provide long-term protection for South Florida’s water supply.”

A total of 6.54 inches of rain fell across 16 counties in July, representing 93 percent of average, or 0.49 inches below average.

Much of this rain fell across the Upper Kissimmee and Caloosahatchee basins and the Southwest Coast, all of which saw above-average rainfall for the month. The Southwest Coast recorded the wettest conditions in the District for July, with 10.28 inches of rain, representing 115 percent of average, or 1.35 inches above average.

While rainfall helped improve water levels along the lower east coast, much of this region continues to be listed by the U.S. Drought Monitor as being in a severe to extreme drought, including:

- Broward County, which again registered as the driest area in the District, received 3.80 inches of rain, representing 59 percent of average, or 2.69 inches below average.
- Miami-Dade County recorded 5.31 inches of rain, representing 81 percent of average, or 1.27 inches below average.
- Palm Beach County recorded 5.50 inches of rain, representing 84 percent of average, or 1.04 inches below average.

Although water levels in these areas remain in their lower ranges for this time of year, water managers have not seen indications of problems such as saltwater intrusion. Water levels in two of South Florida's three Water Conservation Areas also remain lower than average for this time of year.

Lake Okeechobee stood at 12.28 feet NGVD today, which is also low for this time of year. 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.

### **Wet Season Update**

District-wide, rainfall has remained below average for the wet season to date. A total of 13.24 inches of rain was recorded, representing 84 percent of average, or 2.55 inches below average.

In response, SFWMD water shortage management teams continue reviewing regional water levels, salinity levels in coastal monitor wells and utility data. The District also continues to emphasize 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](http://www.sfwmd.gov/2days). There is no change in the rules at this time.

### **South Florida Wet Season Facts**

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

- Typically, about two-thirds of annual rains fall during the wet season, or approximately 35 inches out of 52 inches.

- June is usually South Florida's wettest month.
- The wet season has three general phases:
  - Memorial Day weekend through July 4 weekend is typically the wettest six weeks of the year.
  - Early July through mid-August is hotter and often drier.
  - Late August through October is characterized by highly variable rainfall mainly due to tropical activity and cold fronts.

**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.*