



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

OPERATIONS UPDATE

June 30, 2016

SFWMD Actions to Address Blue-Green Algae State of Emergency

This week Gov. Scott and Martin County Commissioners declared a state of emergency because of blue-green algal blooms in the lakes, rivers and canals of the Treasure Coast. The South Florida Water Management District is pursuing the following actions to lessen the impact of lake releases and local basin stormwater runoff on the naturally occurring algal blooms.

- At the direction of Gov. Scott, the District has begun holding additional water in the Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes north of Lake Okeechobee over what would be held this time of year under normal operating procedures. This will reduce the volume of water flowing south into Lake Okeechobee and the need for higher lake releases.
- The District is increasing discharges from the lake south through the C-10A structure into the L-8 Canal in Palm Beach County from 250 cubic feet per second to 400 cubic feet per second.

In light of the District's recommendation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is reducing their Lake Okeechobee releases from approximately 1,800 cubic feet per second to 1,170 cubic feet per second.

The District will implement the Governor's executive order by accelerating the use of private properties to store additional water. The Florida Legislature and Gov. Scott appropriated approximately \$47.8 million for that purpose last session.

The District will continue to explore practical operational steps that can be taken to address the algal blooms. In addition, the District is continuing to sample waterways as it has been doing and is coordinating with other state agencies that are responsible for algae response.

- For more information on the District's responses to blue-green algae and facts about algae please visit the District's website at <http://sfwmd.link/AlgaeResponse>.
- For information on the Department of Environmental Protections response to blue-green algae visit the DEP's website at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/bgalgae/index.htm>.
- For more information about blue-green algae visit the Florida Department of Health's website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/aquatic-toxins/documents/cyano-faqs-pio.pdf>.

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The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

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