



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

OPERATIONS UPDATE

July 1, 2016

SFWMD Taking More Action to Address Blue-Green Algae Emergency

This week Gov. Rick Scott and the Martin County Commission declared a state of emergency because of blue-green algal blooms in the lakes, rivers and canals of South Florida. Since then the South Florida Water Management District has been pursuing several actions to address the impact of the blooms. This includes holding additional water in the Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes north of Lake Okeechobee to reduce the volume of water flowing south into Lake Okeechobee.

The District has begun requesting the use of private properties to store additional water. In response, Florida Power and Light Co. (FPL) confirmed it can temporarily store approximately 2.2 billion gallons per month of Lake Okeechobee water withdrawn from the C-44 canal in the cooling pond at the FPL Martin Clean Energy Center near Indiantown in western Martin County. Storage of this water will begin today and continue for approximately three to four months.

"On behalf of our Governing Board, I would like to thank FPL for responding so quickly to this water storage request after the governor's declaration of emergency," said SFWMD Governing Board Chairman Daniel O'Keefe. "Each of us has an important role to play, including the private sector. FPL has proven to be a great partner with its actions today."

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 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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