

# 2012 WATER WATCH

*Keeping an Eye on Water Resources*

## District-Wide Conditions for August 17, 2012

*The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is issuing the following briefing:*

In the midst of the wet season, frequent rainfall has built up the water supply throughout much of the 16-county region. However, rain does not fall evenly across South Florida, and some areas have not seen a significant seasonal boost in water levels. While Miami-Dade County has been saturated, the Upper Kissimmee basin remains impacted by its driest November through April on record.

Due to the winter's rainfall deficit and resulting low water flow from the Kissimmee Basin, Lake Okeechobee remains below average for this time of year. The lake is 1.87 feet below average and has risen only half a foot since the wet season began in early May. On the west coast, recent rainfall has improved salinity levels in the Caloosahatchee Estuary, but the area is experiencing below average rainfall for the wet season.

The District continues to monitor water levels and operate the system to capture as much water as possible while maintaining flood control. For more information on the rainy season and other water updates, visit:

- [Flood and Rainy Season Readiness](#)
- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Precipitation Forecast](#)

### Lake Okeechobee Levels

<b>Today</b>	<b>12.15 feet</b>
<b>Historical Average for Today</b>	<b>14.02 feet</b>
<b>This Date One Year Ago</b>	<b>10.34 feet</b>
<b>One Month Ago</b>	<b>12.01 feet</b>
<b>One Week Ago</b>	<b>12.14 feet</b>

### Water Levels in Key Locations

LOCATION	WATER LEVEL	ONE WEEK AGO	HISTORICAL AVERAGE FOR TODAY
Lake Istokpoga	38.40 feet	38.24 feet	38.44 feet
WCA-1	16.27 feet	16.03 feet	15.63 feet
WCA-2	12.09 feet	12.05 feet	12.60 feet
WCA-3	10.25 feet	10.25 feet	10.03 feet
Lake Kissimmee	50.62 feet	50.29 feet	50.45 feet

For a map of wet season rainfall totals in all District basins, [click here](#).

## Water Conservation Measures

- South Florida is under the District's Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule that limits residential and business landscape irrigation to two or three days per week based on location.
  - Some city and county governments have adopted local ordinances that differ from the District rule and may further limit landscape irrigation. To determine watering days and times in your area, contact your local government or visit [www.sfwmd.gov/2days](http://www.sfwmd.gov/2days).
- Permitted water users such as nurseries, agriculture, golf courses and utilities are required to continue following the water use conditions in their permits.
  - Copies of water use permits can be found in the Application/Permit records search online at [www.sfwmd.gov/ePermitting](http://www.sfwmd.gov/ePermitting).
- For information about water conservation, visit [www.savewaterfl.com](http://www.savewaterfl.com).
- Information about current weather and water conditions can be found at [www.sfwmd.gov/waterwatch](http://www.sfwmd.gov/waterwatch).

## Other Actions

### Lake Okeechobee releases

- Since May, there have been multiple beneficial releases of water from Lake Okeechobee to the Caloosahatchee River, and estuary salinity levels have significantly improved. Wet season rainfall and local basin runoff are providing sufficient inflow to the Caloosahatchee to maintain favorable salinity levels in the upper estuary. Based on current ecological conditions and established guidelines in Adaptive Protocols, District staff on August 15 recommended no releases at this time. The operational position statement is available [here](#).

### Navigation

- The following locks on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee remain closed until lake levels rise to allow for safe navigation:
  - S-135 at J&S Fish Camp in Martin County
  - G-36 at Henry Creek in Okeechobee County
  - S-127 at Buckhead Ridge in Glades County
  - S-131 at Lakeport in Glades County
- The S-193 Lock, located on Taylor Creek on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee, is closed due to ongoing renovation work to refurbish the lock and ensure decades of reliable service.

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