

2011 WATER WATCH

Keeping an Eye on Water Resources

District-Wide Conditions for September 6, 2011

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

Despite recent rainfall, some surface water and groundwater levels have been slow to recover from a dry period that lasted from October until June. Lake Okeechobee remains significantly below its historical average. South Florida's transition into the dry season begins next month, and meteorologists are forecasting rainfall levels to be below average.

The District is storing as much water as possible during this wet season. However, not all rainfall can be retained due to limited storage options and the need for immediate flood protection. Unless there is significant tropical rainfall in the coming weeks to boost water levels in Lake Okeechobee and other key areas, the region is expected to remain in a water shortage through the spring.

Lake Okeechobee Levels

Today	10.77 feet
Historical Average for Today	14.33 feet
This Date One Year Ago	14.06 feet
One Week Ago	10.65 feet
Deficit Below Water Shortage Line	1.71 feet

Water Levels in Key Locations (as of September 6, 2011)

LOCATION	WATER LEVEL	HISTORICAL AVERAGE FOR TODAY	THIS DATE LAST YEAR
Lake Istokpoga	38.60 feet	38.69 feet	38.65 feet
WCA-1	15.71 feet	16.22 feet	16.71 feet
WCA-2	13.36 feet	13.12 feet	12.79 feet
WCA-3	9.78 feet	10.32 feet	10.36 feet
Lake Kissimmee	51.35 feet	50.85 feet	50.73 feet

For a map of wet season rainfall totals since June 1 in all District basins, [click here](#).

Water Shortage Orders and Conservation Measures

- [Modified Phase II restrictions](#), effective March 26, limit landscape irrigation to two days per week throughout the District.
- [Modified Phase III restrictions](#), effective June 10, limit landscape irrigation to one day per week in the City of West Palm Beach's utility service area, including

the City of West Palm Beach and the towns of South Palm Beach and Palm Beach.

- On June 13, the West Palm Beach City Commission implemented additional emergency restrictions for its utility service area. The resolution can be viewed [here](#).
- Landscape irrigation using reclaimed water is not restricted under the orders. Additional watering is permitted for new plantings.
- Irrigation times vary by area:
 - For Broward, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties. Also for portions of Osceola County within the SFWMD boundaries, the Town of Windermere in Orange County, cities within Lee County except Cape Coral and Palm Beach County except areas served by the West Palm Beach utility – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Charlotte, Highlands and Polk counties – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Toho Water Authority Service Area (Osceola County) – [Just the Facts](#)
 - The City of Cape Coral – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Collier County – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Orange County, except the Town of Windermere – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Unincorporated areas of Lee County – [Just the Facts](#)

Water Shortage Order – Golf Courses

- [Modified Phase I restrictions](#), effective March 26, require a 15-percent cutback for golf course irrigation in Broward, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties.
 - Effective Aug. 7 through Oct. 31, a [temporary modification](#) allows golf courses to apply for a variance if needed for new plantings or other course rehabilitation.

Water Shortage Order – Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA)

- [Modified Phase III restrictions](#), effective May 19, require a 45-percent reduction in surface water withdrawals for all agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment users within LOSA, which includes portions of Okeechobee, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties and the Everglades Agricultural Area.

Water Shortage Order – Agricultural and Nursery Water Users in South Miami-Dade County

- A [water shortage order](#), effective March 26, places Phase I restrictions on agricultural and nursery water users within the South Dade Water Use Basin. Users shall limit the times and hours of irrigation operations.

Water Shortage Order – Southern Portion of the Indian Prairie Water Use Basin

- An [operational order](#), effective March 26, allows for District operation of certain bypass structures in the southern portion of the Indian Prairie Water Use Basin.

- A [water shortage order](#) requires a 15-percent reduction in surface water withdrawals for all agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment users.

Water Shortage Order – Permitted Water Users in Broward and Palm Beach Counties

- A [water shortage order](#), effective March 26, places Phase I restrictions on agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment permittees that use or divert surface and ground water in these counties.
 - Withdrawals from surface waters by specified users are reduced 15 percent.
 - Agricultural and nursery operations shall limit the hours of irrigation.

Other Actions

Navigation

- The S-65E navigation lock between the Kissimmee River and Lake Okeechobee reopened on Aug. 25 after water levels sufficiently rose to allow boat traffic.
- These locks on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee remain closed:
 - S-135 at J&S Fish Camp in Martin County
 - S-193 at Taylor Creek in Okeechobee County
 - G-36 at Henry Creek in Okeechobee County
 - S-127 at Buckhead Ridge in Glades County
 - S-131 at Lakeport in Glades County

Hurricane Season

- In preparation for storms, residents are encouraged to check swales and drainage systems to ensure that there are no blockages to impede water flow. Land adjacent to canal embankments must be clear of shrubs and other encroaching objects.

Information about water shortage orders and warnings, current weather and water conditions and water-saving tips can be found at www.sfwmd.gov/waterwatch.

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**Water shortage questions from the public can be directed to:
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