

State of the Water Management System

Water Shortage Edition



Weekly Update

October 8 - 13, 2007

**Mission Statement:**

To underscore our commitment to keep you informed, we will send this update weekly. We encourage you to share this water resources information with your constituents.



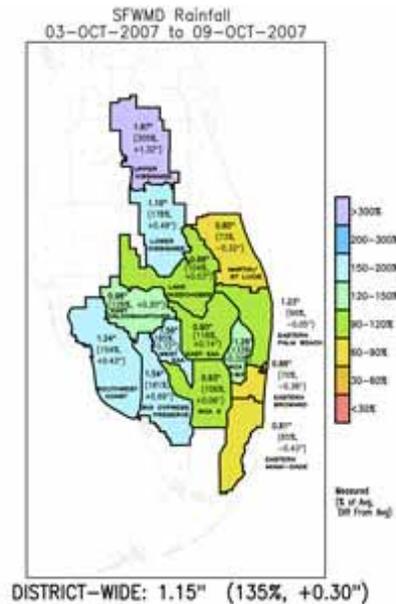
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South Florida Water
Management District
www.sfwmd.gov

District News and Happenings

- A lingering water shortage and record-low water levels in Lake Istokpoga has forced the District to declare another water shortage emergency for the Upper Indian Prairie Water Use Basin. An [emergency order](#) signed this week by District Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle calls for an immediate termination of all water withdrawals directly from Lake Istokpoga or from any of the canals not separated from the lake by a structure. This order immediately affects four District water use permit holders and several dozen area residents, who depend on Lake Istokpoga for landscape irrigation. Drinking water supplies and water drawn from wells for irrigation are not affected by this order. Because conditions may change, the District will publish information each Friday -- or daily should canal levels continue to drop -- about which canals may be used for water withdrawals. This information will be available via the District's website at www.sfwmd.gov or by calling (561) 682-2900 to hear a recorded message.
- A new directive from the Governing Board of District is strengthening protection for critical areas within the proposed footprints of environmental restoration projects in South Florida. Citing the scarcity of coastal lands available for Everglades restoration in Miami-Dade County, the District Governing Board recently identified nearly 6,400 acres along Cutler Bay and within the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands restoration project footprint as a critical area of public interest. Under the new directive, unanimously approved by the Governing Board, applications for environmental resource permits within the critical area of public interest will be denied to protect the lands for restoration. Permit applications within the overall boundaries of the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands Project, but outside of the identified critical coastal area, will be processed on a case-by-case basis and will face a high level of scrutiny to ensure that the proposed use does not impact the Everglades restoration project.
- Scientists from the University of Florida and the District will release dozens of *Lixadmontia franki* flies on Friday at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center as part of a continuing study of their effectiveness at controlling an invasive, introduced species of weevil. The Mexican bromeliad weevil damages and destroys several varieties of Florida's native bromeliads, including those found in the Everglades.

System-Wide Overview



Click map for larger image

Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 1.15 inches.
- Drier air is moving over the District from the northeast, which may dramatically decrease daily shower coverage. Showers that do develop will be focused to the east and south. The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is near average.

U.S. Drought Monitor:

The [Drought Monitor](#) focuses on broad-scale conditions and identifies general drought areas, labeling droughts by intensity. This week, areas of the District fall into four levels of intensity, ranging from normal to severe drought.

Lake Okeechobee:

Lake Okeechobee measured 10.11 feet NGVD 29 (8.55 feet NAVD 88) on Tuesday, which is 0.26 feet higher than it was on that day last week and 0.52 feet higher than it was a month ago. The latest monitoring data support a continued trend of increasing water clarity and submerged aquatic vegetation abundance, declining phosphorus concentrations and a near-absence of severe algal blooms in nearshore areas of the lake during the past year.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin:

The upper Kissimmee Basin received 1.97 inches of rain over the last seven days, and the lower basin received 1.10 inches. In most of the upper basin lakes, the water stage has risen approximately 0.3 feet in the last seven days. Water releases continue from Lake Tohopekaliga and are being held in Lakes Cypress, Hatchineha and Kissimmee.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries:

Rainfall and local basin runoff lowered average salinity throughout the St. Lucie Estuary last week. Based on the salinity tolerance of oysters, salinity conditions in the estuary are poor. Average salinity increased slightly throughout the Caloosahatchee Estuary last week, and salinity conditions are good.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs):

Although some areas have decreasing water levels, water levels in the northern regions are increasing by an average of more than 0.25 feet per week. Water

depths remain good for this time of year because all locations have at least 1.0 feet of water.

Everglades National Park:

Everglades National Park wetland water levels increased as a result of last week's rain.

Note: This rainfall information is based on rain gauges within the Park. The map above captures District rain gauge data only.

Florida Bay:

Due to rainfall and strong discharge moving out of the coastal creeks toward Florida Bay, salinity dropped across much of the area again last week.

Area Water Restrictions:



Click map for larger image

[Upper and Lower East Coast Service Areas, which comprise the residential areas of St. Lucie, Martin, eastern Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties - Modified Phase II Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)

Phase II water restrictions target outdoor water use, limiting lawn watering for five acres or less, to two days a week: Wednesdays and Saturdays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for odd numbered addresses; Thursdays and Sundays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for even-numbered addresses. Restrictions for land greater than five acres and other guidelines are available on the latest [Just the FACTs sheet](#). The Phase II restrictions in this region apply to users who get their water from public utilities, private wells, canals, ponds and lakes.

[Lake Worth, Lantana, Hallandale and Dania Beach Water Utilities - Modified Phase III Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)

These utilities have been identified as at risk for saltwater intrusion based on elevated chloride levels in monitoring wells. The modified Phase III restrictions limit all landscape irrigation or five acres or less to one day per week and four hours per day: Saturdays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for odd numbered addresses; Sundays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for even-numbered addresses. Restrictions on all other uses of water will be lifted. Users in the City of West Palm Beach will be

included as part of this declaration, in concurrence with a SFWMD emergency order that allows the City, under specific conditions, to deliver water supplied from the L-8 Reservoir or from the City's emergency well field to Clear Lake to replenish the City's drinking water supply. The modified Phase III restrictions limit all landscape irrigation to one day per week and four hours per day; restrictions on all other uses of water will be lifted. Restrictions for land greater than five acres and other guidelines are available on the latest Just the [FACTs sheet](#).

Residents served by **West Palm Beach Utilities** continue to be covered by [City of West Palm Beach Restrictions](#), which limit *all outside uses* of water -- including washing cars or boats -- to 1 day per week.

[Lake Okeechobee Service Area - Phase III Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)

Phase III water use restrictions predominantly impact agricultural, industrial and commercial water users in parts of Hendry, Glades, Okeechobee, Lee, Martin, St. Lucie and western Palm Beach counties. They also apply to residential users whose water source is Lake Okeechobee – or any of the surface water canals recharged by the lake – and includes utility customers in South Bay, Belle Glade, Pahokee, Okeechobee and Clewiston. North Lee County Utility service area customers are also affected by this order because they rely on the Olga Treatment Plant which draws water from Lake Okeechobee via the Caloosahatchee River. Agricultural water users in these areas are required to reduce surface water consumption by 45 percent. Residential users must limit lawn watering, boat and car washing to one day per week: Saturdays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for odd numbered addresses; Sundays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for even-numbered addresses. Groundwater sources (wells) are not restricted by this order.

[Lake Istokpoga Area/Upper Indian Prairie Basin \(portions of Highlands and Glades counties\) - Phase III Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)

Effective May 11, permitted agricultural and other area users who withdraw water directly from surface water sources connected to Lake Istokpoga will transition to Phase III water restrictions in incremental stages as the water level of Lake Istokpoga continues to drop below specified thresholds. Users were notified of the specific tiers representing 35 and 45 percent cutbacks and are encouraged to voluntarily exercise additional water conservation measures as practicable.

[Lee, Collier, Hendry, and Glades Counties; portion of Charlotte County - Phase II Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)

Phase II restrictions remain in place in Lee, Collier, Hendry and Glades counties, along with a portion of Charlotte County, limiting lawn watering and car washing to two days a week: Wednesdays and Saturdays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for odd-numbered addresses; Thursdays and Sundays from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. for even-numbered addresses.

These limitations and other actions are intended to produce a 30 percent water use reduction by agricultural, industrial, commercial, golf course, landscaping and residential water users. The Phase II restrictions in this region apply to users who get their water from public utilities, private wells, canals, ponds and lakes.

Phase II and Phase III restrictions allow low-volume, spot-watering using a hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the designated landscape watering days. Additional watering days and times also have been

allowed for new landscaping over a 30-day establishment period.

The use of 100 percent reclaimed water, an alternative water source, is not subject to restrictions. The use of water for health, fire, safety and other essential purposes also is not restricted.

Did you know?

The South Florida Water Management District manages and protects the water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. Want to hear more? It would be our pleasure to meet with your organization to give a presentation and answer your questions. If interested, please contact Niki Spencer at 800-432-2045 or 561-686-8800, ext. 6004.

** SFWMD water managers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers work together to manage Lake Okeechobee. Water releases from the lake are made in accordance with a federally authorized regulation schedule based on many factors such as time of year, current water conditions, predicted rainfall and lake level.*