



Weekly Update

June 25-29, 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.*



[sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov)

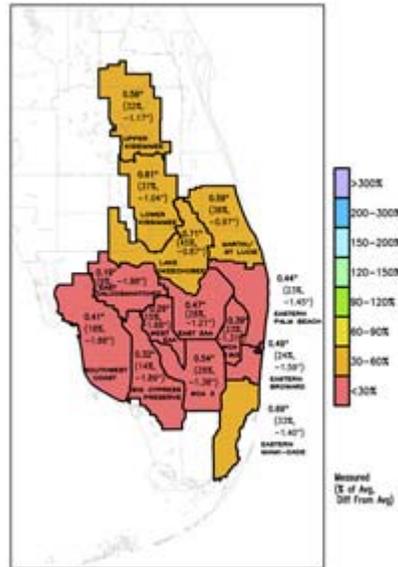
South Florida Water  
Management District  
[www.sfwmd.gov](http://www.sfwmd.gov)

**District News and Happenings**

- Florida's leaders have again demonstrated this State's continued and unwavering commitment to environmental improvement by the signing of Senate Bill 392. The District is grateful for the leadership of Governor Crist in signing into law this landmark legislation. The District deeply appreciates the commitment of Senate President Pruitt, Senator Saunders, Speaker Rubio, Representative Mayfield, Representative Williams and the entire Florida Legislature for their vision in recognizing the importance of the northern Everglades to the health of South Florida's environment and economy. This comprehensive legislation will improve both the quality and quantity of water flowing from the Kissimmee Basin into Lake Okeechobee, helping to preserve and protect the lake, the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries and ultimately the southern Everglades. Dedicating an additional \$2 billion through 2020 will allow Florida to build on the extensive work already underway to restore America's Everglades. The District is grateful for the opportunity to partner with our local governments and communities to make restoration a reality.
- The District held five workshops last week for rulemaking on mandatory year-round landscape irrigation measures, and the majority of the input was favorable. A survey has been added to the District's external website to gather additional public feedback.
- Recognizing the importance of public involvement in the protection and management of Lake Okeechobee, the District's Governing Board adopted a resolution in June directing staff to convene a "Water Summit" to explore short-term water management challenges and to build understanding among South Florida's stakeholders. The Water Resources Advisory Commission Lake Okeechobee Committee is hosting the 2007 Water Summit on Monday, July 30, 2007. Structured as a roundtable forum, staff presentations will highlight current lake and ecosystem conditions for panel participants. Afternoon discussions will then focus on current and immediate short-term water management challenges and decision making in the face of meteorological uncertainties. Discussion outcomes will be compiled and delivered to the District's Governing Board in August.

**System-Wide Overview**

Click map for larger image



### Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was 0.50 inches.
- The rainfall outlook for the next seven days is for near average rainfall. An atmospheric pattern that has produced below average rains over the last seven days will evolve to produce above average rains the last half of this week.

### System-wide overview:

On June 21, Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle signed an executive order rescinding the water restrictions in place since March 22, 2007 for agricultural users in the St. Lucie County Agricultural Area. The earlier water shortage order primarily impacted permitted agricultural users who draw surface water from the C-23, C-24 and C-25 canals, which are located in Martin and St. Lucie counties. Relying upon rainfall-generated runoff from adjacent watersheds, the C-23, C-24 and C-25 canals are not connected to Lake Okeechobee and tend to respond quickly to wet season rains. Aided by localized June rainfall and subsequent reduced irrigation demands by area farmers, water levels in these canals increased by an average of five feet in the first two weeks of June, and ranged from 18.7 to 22.0 feet above sea level on June 21. This retraction marks the first relaxing of water restrictions in any portion of the District since the start of the current water shortage. The water level in Lake Okeechobee remains low for this time of year, and water use restrictions in all other service areas remain in place until further notice.

### 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 areas of intensity, ranging from abnormally dry to severe drought.

### Lake Okeechobee:

Lake Okeechobee measured at 8.92 feet NGVD 29 (7.62 feet NAVD 88) on Tuesday, which is 0.02 feet lower than that day last week and 0.14 feet lower than it was a month ago. This month's water quality sampling was limited to five of the 27 monitoring sites due to low water conditions. Muck removal on Lake Okeechobee is complete at three of four sites. More than 1.5 million cubic yards of muck has been removed.

### Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin:

The upper Kissimmee Basin received 0.71 inches of rain over the last seven days, and the lower basin received 0.62 inches. No releases are being made at this

time. Snail kites continue to be present on East Lake Tohopekaliga, Lake Tohopekaliga and Lake Kissimmee. The Kissimmee River has lacked flow for 230 days.

**St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries:**

In the St. Lucie Estuary, no releases occurred at S-80 over the past week. Recovery of seagrasses near the St. Lucie Inlet continues, with densities and canopy height higher than they were at this time last year. Salinity levels in the estuary are at or near the upper limit of the preferred range. In the Caloosahatchee Estuary, discharge occurred at S-79 last week. Salinity remains high in the upper estuary. In the lower estuary and San Carlos Bay, the high salinity levels are good for seagrass and fair for oysters.

**Water Conservation Areas (WCAs):**

Stages in most of the Everglades fell with lower rainfall this past week. Water levels in WCA-2B and WCA-3A are below ground surface. Above-ground water levels ranged from a high of 1.23 feet in southern WCA-3A to 0.04 feet in WCA-2A. WCA-1 and WCA-3 continue to be below regulation, and WCA-2 is above regulation.

**Everglades National Park:**

Rainfall was patchy in the Park (0.32-0.76 inches), leading to mixed patterns for the week. In Shark River Slough and at the Taylor Slough Bridge, water levels rose by 1 inch and 0.8 inches, respectively. In the southern part of the system, Craighead Pond and panhandle water levels dropped by 0.6 inches and 2.3 inches, respectively, apparently receiving less rainfall than upstream stations.

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

**Florida Bay:**

Salinity concentrations dropped substantially in many areas of Florida Bay, suggesting that flow is starting to make its way into the Bay from the Everglades, on schedule for this time of year.

**Area Water Restrictions:**



Click map for larger image

**[Eastern Palm Beach, Broward, and a small portion of Martin County served by Tequesta Water Utilities - Phase III Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)**

Phase III water restrictions target outdoor water use, limiting lawn watering and car washing to one day a 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.

These limitations and other actions and are intended to produce a 45 percent water use reduction by the combined conservation efforts of all users, including agricultural, industrial, commercial, golf course, landscaping and residential water users. The Phase III restrictions in this region apply to users who get their water from public utilities, private wells, canals, ponds and lakes.

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

Phase III water use restrictions predominantly impact 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.

#### **[Martin and St. Lucie Counties - Phase II Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)**

Phase II water restrictions target outdoor water use, 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 and are intended to produce a 30 percent water use reduction by the combined conservation efforts of all users, including agricultural, industrial, commercial, golf course, landscaping and residential water users. The Phase II restrictions in this region apply to users who draw their water from public utilities, private wells, canals, ponds and lakes.

#### **[Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties - Phase II Mandatory Water Use Restrictions](#)**

Phase II restrictions remain in place for Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, 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 and 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 draw their water from public utilities, private wells, canals, ponds and lakes.

#### **[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.*