

Weekly Update: September 7, 2005



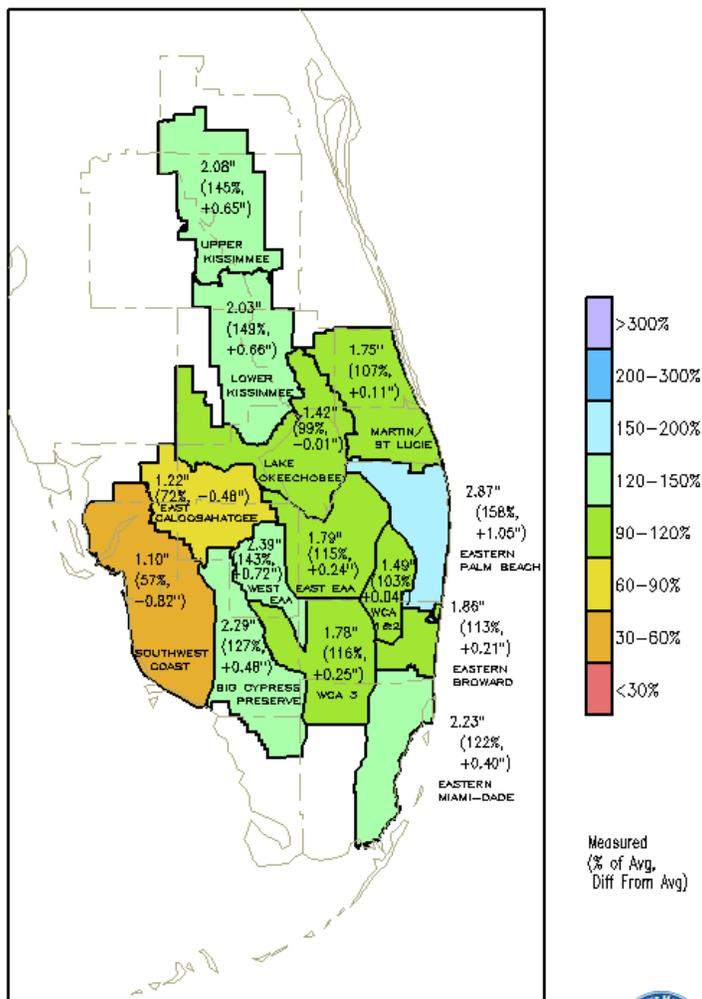
just the
FACTs

This fact sheet is provided as a reference to encourage a greater understanding of the various issues related to managing water in south Florida.

State of the Water Management System

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 Rainfall
29-AUG-2005 to 04-SEP-2005



DISTRICT-WIDE: 1.82" (113%, +0.20")

GRADS: COLA/ICES



Rainfall overview:

- District-wide rainfall for the past week was less than 2".
- Rainfall total for the month of August was 6.99", which is average.
- Rainfall outlook for the next 7 days is above normal.
- Outlook for the remainder of the wet season is for an increased likelihood of above average rainfall.



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State of the Water Management System

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System-wide overview:

Tropical depression 16, upgraded to Tropical Storm Ophelia, is anticipated to bring heavy rain to the east and north portions of the District. Managers are lowering canal levels in these areas to reduce flooding potential and create more storage capacity for the runoff. Pulse releases continue from Lake Okeechobee.

Lake Okeechobee — Lake level is at 15.82 ft NGVD, up slightly (0.07 ft) since last week.* Conditions on the lake were rough last week; as a result the algae blooms have dispersed and mixed into the water column. Monthly vegetation surveys are taking place this week and next.

Upper Chain of Lakes/Kissimmee Basin — Stages in the upper basin lakes continue to be at or near regulation schedules. River temperature is still seasonally high, with a low concentration of dissolved oxygen. Treatment of exotic vegetation continues in pools B and C. Some small areas of algae blooms were observed in pool A.

St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries — Half of the flow into both estuaries is from basin runoff. Salinity improved slightly in the St. Lucie, but salinity conditions in both estuaries remains poor.

Water Conservation Areas — Water depths continue to be high except in WCA-1, which is below regulation schedule. Levels are above regulation schedule in WCA-2A and WCA-3A. Prolonged deep water may start to cause stress on trees in these areas.

Everglades National Park — Rainfall was high during the past week, from 1” to 4.5” (at Taylor Slough bridge). Water levels in the park did not change due to pumping and management of numerous culverts on the eastern edge of the park.

Note: Rainfall information in the park is based on radar estimates, not rain gauge data. As a result, the map on page one does not include rainfall information for the park.

Florida Bay — Salinity dropped substantially this week across the bay. The hypersalinity in the bay’s interior, which has lasted approximately 5 months, also changed significantly. At the Taylor River mouth and ponds, salinity was close to that of fresh water.

Algae Update — Increased monitoring continues on blue-green algae in Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie River/Estuary, Caloosahatchee River and Upper Kissimmee Chain of Lakes. This species (*Mycrocystis*) is not typically toxic but can form toxic strains. The Blue-Green Algae Task Force meets weekly to coordinate activities and response. Preliminary test results are now being evaluated. On Sept. 2, the District launched a new blue-green algae web site that provides the public with monitoring information, frequently asked questions and related links: <http://www.sfwmd.gov/site/index.php?id=611>

* 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.