



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
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MEDIA ADVISORY

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SFWMD E-Briefing: Dry Season Set for Record

Water conservation remains as critical as ever



(SFWMD, 4-22-09, Click on picture for larger version.)

Drought conditions leave a fishing camp, normally accessible only by airboat, high and dry in Water Conservation Area 2, west of Boca Raton.

West Palm Beach, FL – In an effort to keep the public informed about the dry conditions gripping much of the state, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is issuing the following latest conditions report.

With no significant rain forecast for the final day of the month, the 2008-2009 South Florida dry season ranks as the driest since recordkeeping began in 1932. The 1970-1971

dry season set the previous record as the driest through the end of April. The dry season typically runs from November 1 through May 31. Water levels in the primary regional storage systems – the Water Conservation Areas and Lake Okeechobee – continue to drop. A majority of water levels in wells monitored by the District also declined.

In response to the continually declining water levels, SFWMD Executive Director Carol Ann Wehle has signed emergency orders that create new water use restrictions in two areas of the District that warrant additional resource protection. The orders will do the following:

- **Lake Worth Utilities:** Cap well field withdrawals for the utility at 5.27 million gallons per day to lower the risk of saltwater intrusion. [Existing restrictions](#) limiting landscape irrigation to one day a week remain in effect.
- **Southern Lehigh Acres, Gateway and Corkscrew Areas:** Implement modified Phase II restrictions for users of the Sandstone Aquifer, which is reaching historic low levels, and the Surficial Aquifer. Residential landscape irrigation will be limited to two days a week between midnight and 10 a.m. In addition, the District is aiming for a 30 percent reduction in water use for agriculture, nurseries and golf courses. For specific restrictions for these users, see Page 2 in this [fact sheet](#).

Earlier this month, the District issued a burn ban on public land to protect lives, property and the environment amid the drought. The ban only applies to District-managed land and means no fires in grills, fireplaces or fire rings provided by the District or other authorized management agencies until further notice. The use of portable camp stoves and grills, brought in by users for cooking purposes only, is allowed.

Regardless of seasonal rainfall predictions, persistent wet season rains will likely not arrive for several weeks. The SFWMD is closely monitoring water levels and is urging residents and businesses to conserve water and follow landscape irrigation restrictions to stretch available supplies. More information about irrigation limits by area is available on the District's [water restrictions](#) Web site. For water saving tips, visit www.savewaterfl.com.

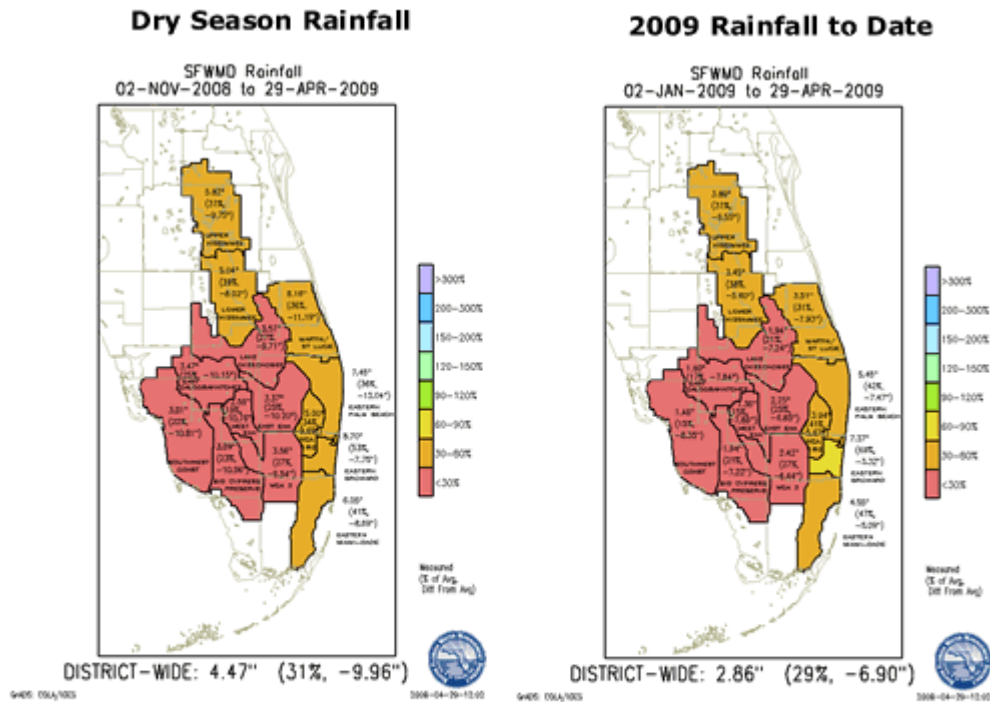
District-Wide Averages as of April 29, 2009

RAINFALL to Date, Jan. 2 - April 29:	2.86 inches
DEFICIT to Date, Jan. 2 - April 29:	- 6.90 inches
DRY SEASON DEFICIT, Nov. 2, 2008 - April 29:	- 9.96 inches

LAKE OKEECHOBEE:

April 29, 2009: 11.20 feet NGVD
April 29, 2008: 10.28 feet NGVD

Rainfall Maps



Click on images above for higher resolution versions

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About the South Florida Water Management District – [Celebrating 60 Years \(1949-2009\)](#)

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.