



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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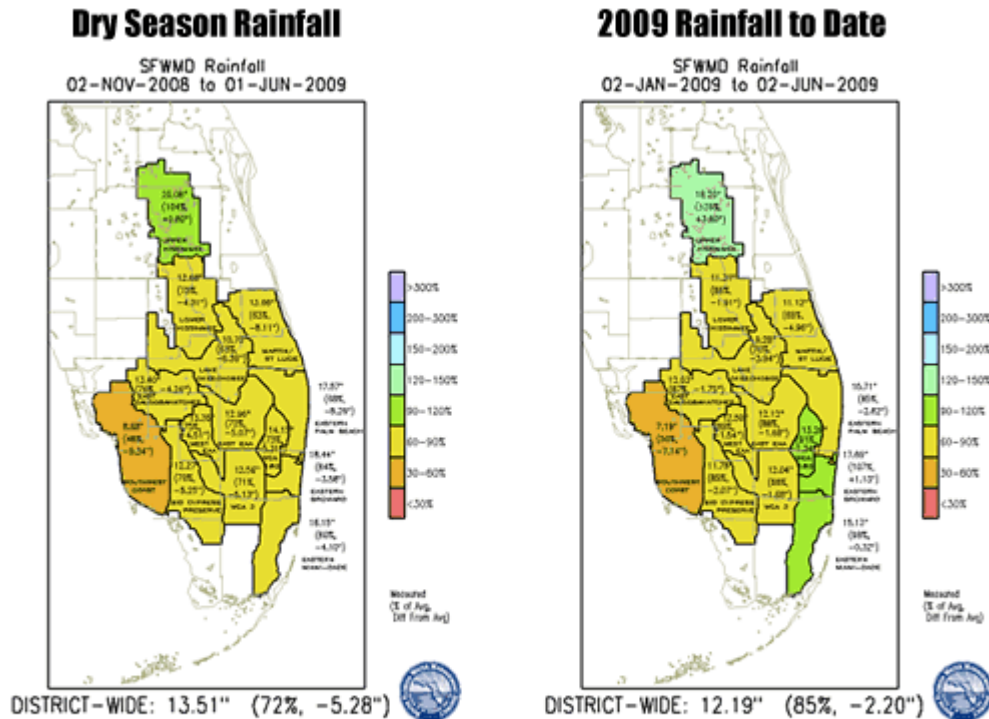
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SFWMD Water Conditions E-Briefing: Significant Rain Recharges, Water Managers Plan for Future

Water conservation remains crucial, and sprinklers should be turned off during and after significant rain falls



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West Palm Beach, FL — In an effort to keep the public informed about regional water supply conditions, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is issuing the following report.

In a continuing display of Florida's weather extremes, the driest six-month period on record in South Florida has been followed by the wettest May on record as the region transitions from the dry season to the wet season. District meteorologists reported an average of 9.04 inches of rain fell across the region in May, surpassing the previous record of 8.95 inches set in 1934. These extremes highlight water management challenges and the delicate balance between water supply, the health of the natural system and flood control for approximately 7.5 million residents. Water managers must look ahead to and plan for the next dry season and beyond to protect regional water resources.

"The rain we received in May brought some much needed near-term relief," said Eric Swartz, an SFWMD meteorologist. "The wet season has just begun, and even though this has been a wet start, a long-term trend is not yet apparent."

The regional system has begun recharging and water is starting to move back into areas that were very dry. Groundwater in the coastal areas went from record lows to above normal for this time of year. Well fields across the region are also recharging. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report shows significant improvement across South Florida.

"This is a great start to the wet season after such an unusually dry period. It is important to note, however, that water levels have not yet fully recovered," said Susan Sylvester, the SFWMD Director of the Operations Control Department. "The region is still in a recovery mode with regional storage areas at the low part of their regulation schedules."

The water level in Lake Okeechobee, which serves as a regional backup water supply, has risen with recent rainfall, but at 11.29 feet NGVD on Tuesday, stands approximately 1.83 feet below its historic average for this time of year. With a dry season rainfall deficit of 5.28 inches, the region is recovering from the driest six-month period in South Florida history — November 2008 through April 2009 — based on records dating back to 1932.

Water conservation remains an important practice, and residents and businesses remain under landscape irrigation restrictions to protect the public supply. Regular rainfall is providing sufficient irrigation for local landscapes, and residents are encouraged to turn off automatic sprinkler systems while wet conditions persist.

The SFWMD is closely monitoring water levels and is urging residents and businesses to conserve water and follow landscape irrigation restrictions. 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 June 2, 2009

RAINFALL to Date, Jan. 2 - June 2:	12.19 inches
DEFICIT to Date, Jan. 2 - June 2:	- 2.20 inches
DRY SEASON DEFICIT, Nov. 2, 2008 - June 1:	- 5.28 inches
LAKE OKEECHOBEE:	June 2, 2009: 11.29 feet NGVD June 2, 2008: 9.58 feet NGVD
RAINFALL BASIN ESTIMATES:	MAP
U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR:	LATEST REPORT

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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.