



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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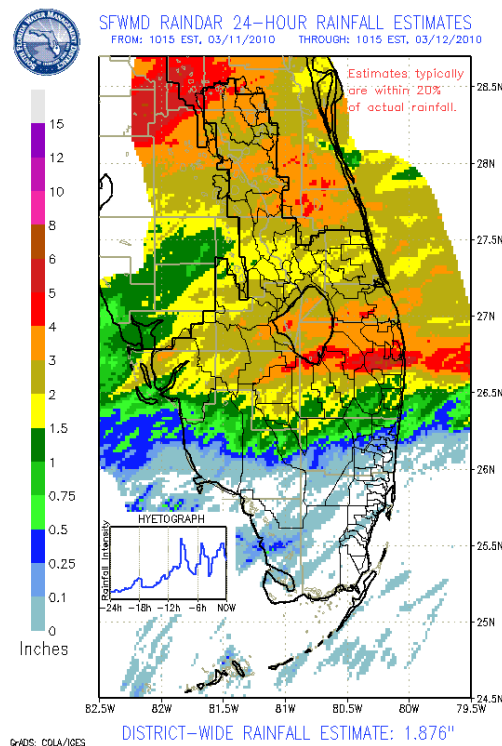
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Water Managers Report Flood Control System Operating as Heavy Rainfall Moves Across Region

Localized areas received as much as 7 inches of rain



(Click on map for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL — The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) reported today that the Central and Southern Flood Control System performed well in handling the storm's heavy rainfall. Some localized flooding remains as a result of significant precipitation, and the District will continue to monitor conditions and respond accordingly.

District crews began working overnight to make room for and move water through the regional flood control system to protect South Florida communities. A critical part of this effort was coordination with local drainage districts, called 298 Districts, municipalities and neighborhoods, which operate the tertiary canal systems that move

water to the regional flood control canals operated and maintained by the SFWMD.

Today's Numbers:

- The West Palm Beach area has received an entire month's worth of rain in about 36 hours.
- Through 7 a.m. Friday morning, the heaviest rain swath of 3 to 5 inches fell from about Clewiston to Palm Beach.
- Local rainfall up to 7 inches was reported at Palm Beach International Airport.

While these types of rain events present a challenge for water managers, they are critical in maintaining long-term water supply. In a typical year, the region receives 15 to 20 percent of its annual rainfall from heavy events like these.

"It was a large rain event but the timing was positive," said Susan Sylvester, SFWMD department director of operations control and hydro data management. "Topping off the system heading into the high evapotranspiration months of April and May helps see the region through until the wet season begins."

In carrying out critical flood control mission, water managers operated the massive flood control pump stations in western Palm Beach County throughout the night to move as much water as possible to prevent localized flooding.

In accordance with the District's operating protocols and to protect communities such as Belle Glade and the Everglades Agricultural Area, the agency also activated the S-2 pump station to move additional water from the canals into Lake Okeechobee. These pumps are an original feature of the 70-year-old water management system constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that protects communities and agricultural land south of Lake Okeechobee from severe storm-related flooding.

To protect regional water supplies and alleviate flooding, the District operates a regional water management system that consists of close to 2,000 miles of canals and levees and 2,200 structures, including 500 major water control structures. By lowering canal levels in advance of the storm, water managers maximized the storage available within the canals to capture and contain runoff.

For more information on the flood control system, see [Managing Every Drop](#).

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About the South Florida Water Management District

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.