



NEWS RELEASE

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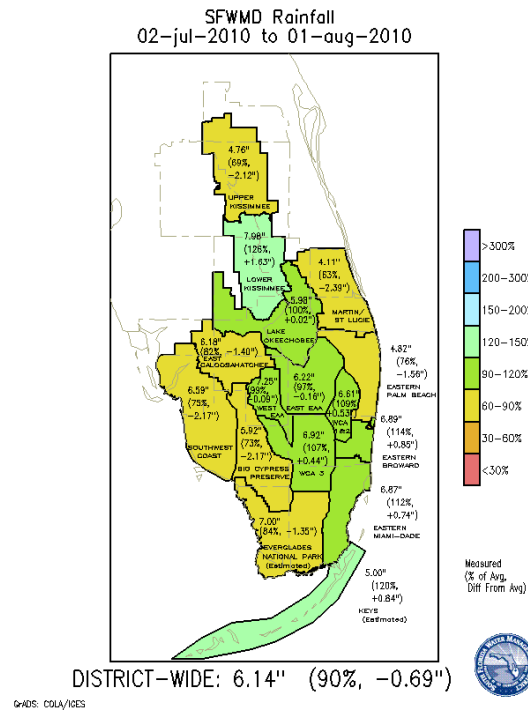
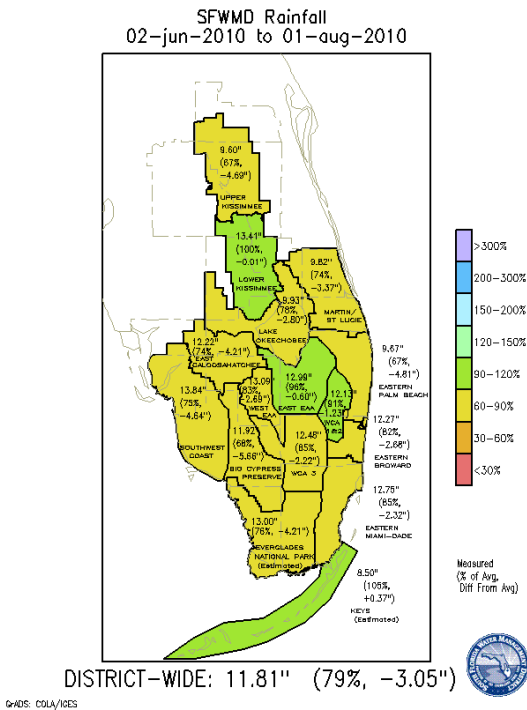
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Rainy Season Still Moving at Slow Pace

Below normal rainfall has helped improve regional water storage capacity

Rainy Season Rainfall to Date

July Rainfall



(Click on the graphics for larger versions.)

West Palm Beach, FL — Even with an early tropical storm, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) meteorologists report a below average start to the 2010 rainy season continued into July.

“The below normal rainfall, coupled with high evapotranspiration and constant adjustments by water managers, has given the regional water storage system a chance to recover from an unusually wet winter,” said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Deputy Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance. “This combination of factors has enabled the system to respond well to the few larger rainfall events we have seen, such

as Tropical Storm Bonnie, while improving storage capacity as we approach the most active part of hurricane season.”

From the beginning of the rainy season in June through the end of July, an average of 11.81 inches of rain fell across the 16-county District. The total represents about 80 percent of the normal rainfall for the two months, or a deficit of around 3 inches.

While June typically produces some of the wettest weeks of the year in South Florida, the six-week period between July 5 and August 15 often provides a lull in the annual rainy season. The District-wide average of 6.14 inches of rain in July was 90 percent of normal, or a rainfall deficit of 0.69 inches. Some local areas – such as the Lower Kissimmee Basin and eastern Miami-Dade and Broward counties – exceeded historical averages for the month.

Tropical Storm Bonnie brought an average of 0.6 inches of rain to the region – with localized totals as high as 3.5 inches in parts of Miami-Dade County – as it quickly moved across the southern tip of the Florida peninsula on July 23. The regional flood control system operated normally to move stormwater away from populated areas. The District received no reports of significant flooding during the storm.

“Although Tropical Storm Bonnie had a minimal impact on South Florida, the District was ready to handle any potential effects from the storm,” said Susan Sylvester, Director of the Operations Control and Hydro Data Management Department. “Residents should remember that each tropical weather system has its own unique characteristics. By remaining prepared, we can all do our part to reduce the risk of flooding.”

Once again showcasing Florida’s weather extremes, the rainy season rainfall deficit follows a 2009-2010 dry season that recorded 131 percent of the average rainfall. This represents 5.88 inches above normal with an average of 24.67 inches of rain falling throughout the District from the beginning of November through the end of May. The higher than average rainfall total presented challenges for wildlife, particularly wading birds that nest in the Everglades.

Even with above average rainfall, the District was able to perform vital maintenance work to the regional flood control system that normally occurs during the dry season. By the start of the 2010 rainy season, \$240 million had been invested in essential maintenance and upgrade work during the past five years to ensure the system of 2,600 miles of canals and levees operates at optimal capacity and provides effective flood control for South Florida’s 7.5 million residents.



The rainy season lasts from June through October, when South Florida receives about 70 percent of its annual average of 52 inches of rainfall. Flooding may happen when large amounts of rain occur during a short period of time or from a single heavy storm, tropical system or hurricane. Forecasters are calling for above normal tropical activity during the current storm season.

This year, the District also enhanced its annual rainy season preparations by launching a new [webpage](#) with information on the shared responsibilities of flood control in South Florida and what residents, businesses and local governments can do to prepare for a storm.

Complementing the online effort, SFWMD staff hosted a series of rainy season readiness presentations across the region – at county commission meetings, schools and civic association gatherings – in an effort to continually inform the public about current conditions and citizens’ role in local flood control.

Tips on how residents can prepare for the rainy season are available on the District’s Rainy Season Readiness [website](#). For updates from the District in case of an emergency, follow the District’s Twitter feed: [@SFWMD](#).

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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.