



# NEWS RELEASE

October 10, 2011

**CONTACT:**

**Randy Smith**

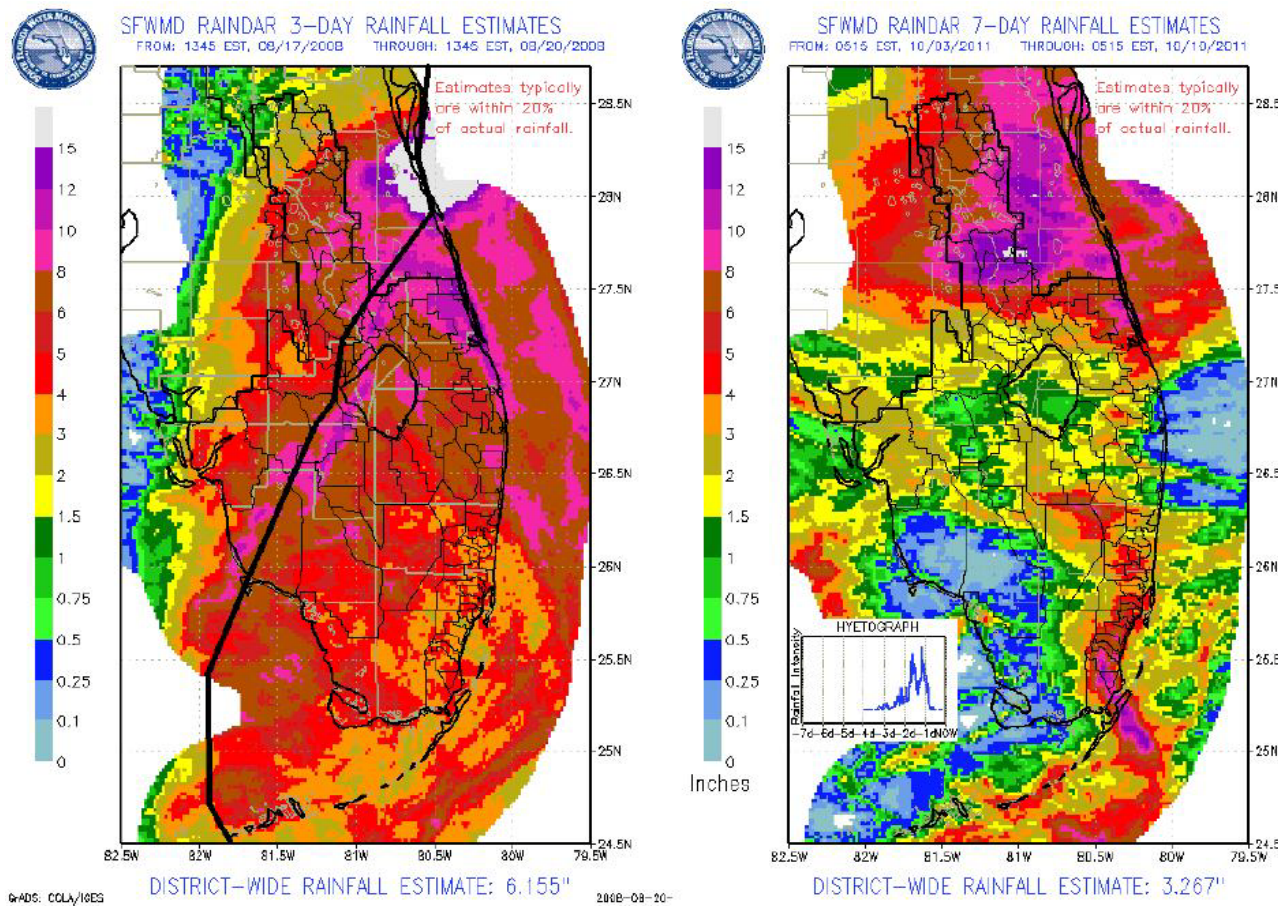
South Florida Water Management District

Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 389-3386

[www.sfwmd.gov/news](http://www.sfwmd.gov/news)

follow us on 

## Water Levels Continue to Rise in Kissimmee Region After Intense Rainfall *Flood control structures are operating at maximum capacity*



*Rainfall from 2008's Tropical Storm Fay (left) was more widespread, but the unnamed system (right) over the weekend dropped more rain over some locations in a shorter period of time.*

**West Palm Beach, FL** — Due to extreme rainfall in the Upper and Lower Kissimmee basins over the weekend, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) water control structures are moving water as quickly as the system can safely operate. However, water levels in certain areas may continue to rise for the next few days before they finally recede.

Stormwater runoff will continue to flow into tributaries, streams, and creeks around the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, causing lake stages to rise for possibly up to a week before they level off.

“Considering some rain gauges recorded 12 to 15 inches of rainfall in a single day, this was an extraordinary rain event,” said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Director of Operations, Maintenance and Construction. “The water control system is operating as it was designed, to lessen the duration of flooding.”

The three-day system that lasted from Friday through Sunday sent a deluge averaging 8 inches in the Upper Kissimmee region, while 7.25 inches fell in the Lower Kissimmee area. One gauge in southern Osceola County recorded 17.12 inches of rain during the three-day event.

The extensive flood control system is operating at maximum capacity while water managers are careful to maintain the integrity of the structures and move as much water as the downstream water body can handle.

Low-lying areas in Polk, Osceola, Orange, Highlands and Okeechobee counties are particularly affected by the rainfall and resulting runoff. Lake Kissimmee experienced a dramatic increase of 1.5 feet, and it continues to rise approximately six inches per day.

The District’s 16-county region averaged more than 3.2 inches of rain during this event, with localized flooding impacting the Upper and Lower Kissimmee basins, St. Lucie County and the Homestead area of Miami-Dade County.

# # #

### **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.*