



NEWS RELEASE

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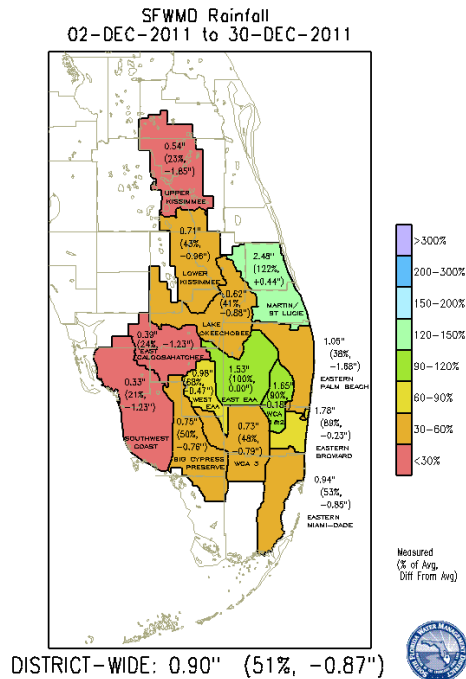
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Dry Season Continues With Below-Average December Rainfall *Water conservation remains essential to protect public water supplies*

December 2011
Rainfall = 0.90 inches



2011 South Florida Rainfall Summary

- 49.32 inches received (averaged District-wide)
- This is 96 percent of the historical annual average
- 2.20 inch deficit
- October 2011, the 4th wettest on record, helped alleviate conditions that began in October 2010, the driest on record.

(Click on the graphic for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL – December rainfall from Orlando to the Florida Keys was about half of the average for the month, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) meteorologists reported today. As in November, the dry conditions did not significantly impact regional water supplies, which are at adequate levels.

“December is a naturally dry time in South Florida,” said SFWMD Meteorologist Geoff Shaughnessy. “Also, evapotranspiration—the amount of water lost from lakes, streams

and vegetation – is at its lowest average in December and January, when temperatures are cooler and sunlight is shorter.”

A forecast of below-average rainfall remains in place for the rest of the dry season. A water shortage warning remains in place for the entire 16-county District to encourage water conservation practices.

This month, a total of 0.90 inches of rain fell across the District through December 30, representing 51 percent of the average for this time of year, or a deficit of 0.87 inches. A majority of the region received below-average rainfall for the month, with the largest deficits over the Upper Kissimmee and southwestern regions.

Unlike the water supply impacts from record dry conditions in 2010, water levels so far this dry season have been receding slowly. Lake Okeechobee stood at 13.68 feet NGVD today, about a foot below its historical average for this time of year. The 730-square-mile lake, which serves as a backup water supply for South Florida, received a major boost from October rains and remains above its water shortage management zone.

Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule

Adopted by the SFWMD Governing Board in November 2009, the Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule established a permanent two-day-a-week landscape watering schedule throughout the region, with a three-day-a-week provision for some counties. Utilizing the rule’s flexibility, some city and county governments have adopted alternative landscape irrigation ordinances or emergency actions based on local water demands or system limitations. For many areas, landscape watering schedules remain the same under year-round conservation measures as they were under water shortage restrictions.

Details on landscape irrigation limits are available by contacting your local government or by visiting www.sfwmd.gov/2days.

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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.