



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACTS:

Randy Smith

South Florida Water Management District
Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 389-3386

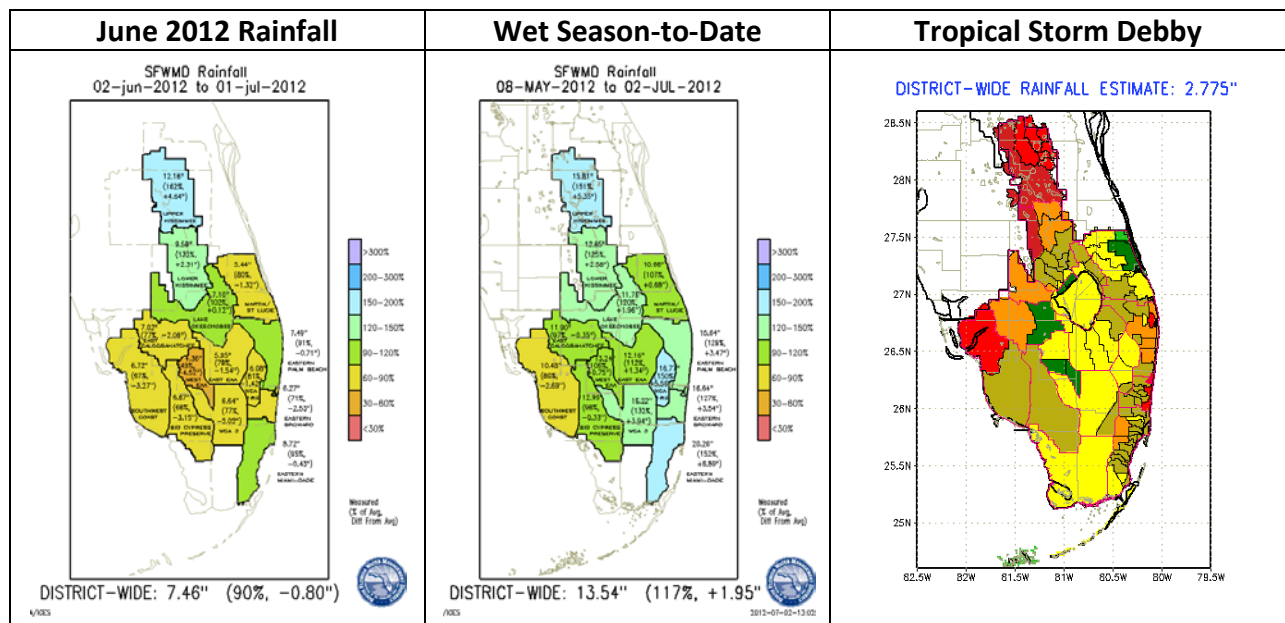
Gabe Margasak

South Florida Water Management District
Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 670-1245

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June Is 'Average Joe' Despite Tropical Storm Debby Overall wet season rainfall is above average so far



(Click on the images for larger versions.)

West Palm Beach, FL – Even with Tropical Storm Debby dousing the Kissimmee region north of Lake Okeechobee, June rainfall was about average across the South Florida Water Management District’s (SFWMD) 16-county region, District meteorologists reported today.

“Tropical Storm Debby just missed giving us the 20-plus inches of rainfall seen in North Florida,” said Susan Sylvester, SFWMD Chief of the Water Control Operations Bureau. “Overall, we had a typical June in our area, and because of an early start to the wet season, water levels are consistent with where they should be this time of year.”

Tropical Storm Debby

Tropical Storm Debby played an integral role in June's rainfall totals, but much of the District south of Kissimmee was on the periphery of the storm. Some of the largest average totals for the June 22 to 28 event included:

- Up to 5 inches in the Upper Kissimmee area
- Up to 3.3 inches in Eastern Palm Beach County
- Up to 2.57 inches in Eastern Broward County
- Up to 2.68 inches in Eastern Miami-Dade County

The District-wide average for the storm was 2.8 inches, with agricultural areas directly south of the lake averaging 1.7 inches.

Based on District weather records, the geographic distribution of June rainfall this year was unusual. Typically, the Kissimmee region experiences lower rainfall totals than areas south of Lake Okeechobee. The storm helped reverse the typical trend.

June Rainfall

June is usually South Florida's wettest month. Dry conditions following the storm led to little rainfall over the last few days of the month.

June's rainfall District-wide was 7.46 inches, or 90 percent of the historical average. The Kissimmee region, followed by eastern Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties, had the highest rainfall totals in the District:

- Upper Kissimmee received 12.18 inches of rain, representing 4.64 inches above the average, or 162 percent of the historical average for this time of year.
- Eastern Miami-Dade County received 8.72 inches of rain, representing 0.43 inches below the average, or 95 percent of the historical average for this time of year.
- Eastern Palm Beach County received 7.49 inches of rain, representing 0.71 inches below the average, or 91 percent of the historical average for this time of year.

Eastern Broward County saw a total of 6.27 inches of rainfall, a deficit of 2.53 inches, or 71 percent of the average for June.

The Southwest Coast, Caloosahatchee, Big Cypress and the Water Conservation Areas were all below average for the month. The region encompassing eastern Collier and Lee counties had the largest rainfall deficit with 6.72 inches, representing 67 percent of the average, or a deficit of 3.27 inches.

Wet Season So Far

The 2012 wet season began early on May 7, but rainfall totals so far have been tempered by several multi-day dry periods wedged in between heavy downpours and Tropical Storm Debby. District-wide, 13.54 inches of rain have fallen, representing 1.95 inches

more rainfall than average, or 117 percent of the average for this time of year. Above-average rain, however, did not fall across the entire region.

As in June, the Kissimmee area has received the most rainfall to date for the 2012 wet season. A majority of the east coast, from St. Lucie to Miami-Dade counties has experienced above average rainfall. The Southwest Coast, including Naples and Fort Myers, has lagged slightly behind, with only 85 percent of the average for this time of year.

Lake Okeechobee, the backup water supply for Florida's lower east coast, is at 12.03 feet NGVD today. This is 1.41 feet below average for this time of year. The lake and surrounding area received 7.10 inches of rainfall in June, representing 0.12 inches above the average, or 102 percent of the historical average for this time of year.

Currently, the U.S. Drought Monitor shows a majority of the state has come out of drought conditions. Only a small portion of the Southwest Coast, including Collier County, and portions of Northwest Florida remain in abnormally dry conditions.

Upcoming Forecast

The National Weather Service (NWS) has forecast an average wet season. In South Florida, early July typically marks the start of a hot and often drier period that lasts through mid-August.

Current weather patterns do not indicate any large rainfall events in the next few days across South Florida.

South Florida Wet Season Facts

- On average, South Florida's wet season begins around May 20 and ends around October 13, lasting about 21 weeks.
- Typically, about two-thirds of annual rains fall during the wet season, or approximately 35 inches out of 52 inches.
- Since 1932, virtually all wet seasons in South Florida have produced 2 to 4 feet of rainfall.
- June is usually South Florida's wettest month.
- The wet season has three general phases:
 - Memorial Day weekend through July 4 weekend, which are typically the wettest six weeks of the year.
 - Early July through mid-August, which are hotter and often drier.
 - Late August through October, which are characterized by highly variable rainfall mainly due to tropical activity and cold fronts.

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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.