



# NEWS RELEASE

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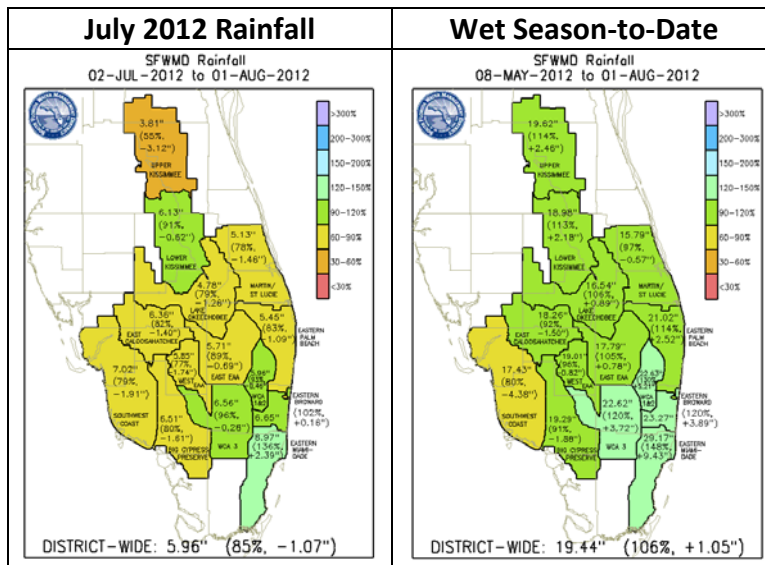
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## July Is Dry for Most of South Florida

*Caloosahatchee Basin rainfall below average; Miami and Broward are exceptions*



(Click on the maps for larger versions.)

**West Palm Beach, FL** — From Orlando to the Florida Keys, much of the South Florida Water Management District’s (SFWMD) 16-county region experienced below-average rainfall in July.

District meteorologists reported today the Upper Kissimmee Basin, the Southwest Coast, Caloosahatchee Basin and Martin and St. Lucie counties were among the driest areas in the region for the month. The opposite was true for eastern Miami-Dade and Broward counties, which saw above-average rainfall from storms in July.

“While it has been a relatively dry month, water levels are acceptable for this time of year,” said Susan Sylvester, SFWMD Chief of the Water Control Operations Bureau. “The drier conditions mean we have regained some storage capacity in the system, which helps us manage heavy rainfall if a storm comes through.”

## July Rainfall

July begins a typically hotter and drier period of the wet season that lasts into mid-August. District-wide rainfall this July was 5.96 inches, which is 85 percent of the historical average for this time of year.

The Upper Kissimmee Basin, the northern-most reach of the District and the headwaters of Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades, was the driest area, with 3.81 inches of rain for the month. This represents 55 percent of the average. Dry conditions continued to the south:

- **Caloosahatchee Basin** received 6.36 inches of rain, which is 82 percent of the average
- **Southwest Coast** received 7.02 inches of rain, which is 79 percent of the average
- **Big Cypress Basin** received 6.51 inches of rain, which is 80 percent of the average
- **Martin and St. Lucie counties** received 5.13 inches of rain, which is 78 percent of the average
- **Eastern Palm Beach County** received 5.45 inches of rain, which is 83 percent of the average

With several drenching storms, eastern Miami-Dade County received the most rainfall in the District during July, with 8.97 inches. This represents 136 percent of average. Also on the east coast:

- **Eastern Broward County** received 6.65 inches of rain, which is 102 percent of average

## 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 in June. District-wide, 19.44 inches of rain has fallen so far, which is 106 percent of average for this time of year.

As with July, eastern Miami-Dade County led the region in rainfall, with 29.17 inches, representing 140 percent of average for the wet season so far. Most of the District received nearly average rainfall, with the exception of some drier areas:

- **Caloosahatchee Basin** received 18.26 inches of rainfall, which is 92 percent of the average
- **Southwest Coast** received 17.43 inches of rainfall, which is 80 percent of the average

Lake Okeechobee, the backup water supply for Florida's lower east coast, is at 12.12 feet NGVD today. This is 1.65 feet below average for this time of year.

Currently, the U.S. Drought Monitor shows South Florida is free from drought conditions, however, the Southwest Coast and Caloosahatchee Basin continued to be classified as abnormally dry.

### **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.*