



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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'A Storm for the Record Books' in Palm Beach County

Tropical Storm Isaac lifts August rainfall above average; recovery continues

<i>Historic Magnitudes of Water</i>	
Water Moved to Tide and Storage Areas	105 billion gallons
Water Moved by Emergency Pumps	2.3 billion gallons
72-Hour Rainfall Maximum	14.85 inches
C-51 Canal's Record Flow Rate	10,300 cubic feet per second
Water Moved to L-8 Reservoir	3.1 billion gallons

West Palm Beach, FL – As the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) continues recovery operations from Tropical Storm Isaac, a post-storm analysis shows the agency moved an estimated 105 billion gallons of water away from residents in Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties during and immediately after the storm.

Water coursing through the District's C-51 primary canal in Palm Beach County reached its highest recorded rate of 10,300 cubic feet per second, as water control gates remained open and pump stations operated at maximum safe capacity for many days following the 1-in-100-year storm event. Field crews continuously checked for erosion or structural damage in the system and ensured canals stayed free of trees and other debris that would block the massive flow of water.

"Isaac was unprecedented in the sheer volume of water the District had to move," said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Director of Operations, Maintenance and Construction. "By maximizing our pre-storm and post-storm operations, the 60-year-old regional system did its job and prevented widespread impacts."

The District's preparation and response – coupled with operations by local drainage districts and municipalities – minimized the extent of flooding for Palm Beach County's

1.3 million residents. While many neighborhoods had excess water in swales, ponds, roadways and backyards, fewer than 50 residences were reported to be directly impacted by flooding. Rural areas with local drainage systems unable to handle the historic quantities of rainfall saw the most flooding impacts and longest recovery times.

Ongoing Recovery Operations

Engineering calculations show that a total of 44.2 billion gallons of water was released to tide in Palm Beach County alone.

Canals, pump stations, gates and culverts moving the remaining water from the most heavily impacted areas, including The Acreage and Loxahatchee, operated around the clock for many days following the storm. These operations included:

- Directing water into the L-8 Reservoir at a sustained rate of 540 cubic feet per second (cfs), which raises the water level about 1 foot a day (Since emergency operations began, 3.1 billion gallons of water have flowed into the reservoir, raising its water level by about 10 feet.)
- Operating pump stations at full capacity around the clock to move water into Stormwater Treatment Area 1 East, 1 West, 2 and 3/4
- Moving water through the massive S-5A and S-319 pump stations off Southern Boulevard into Stormwater Treatment Area 1 West and 1 East
- Discharging more than 1,500 cfs during the peak of the event into Lake Okeechobee from the 10A Culvert at the northwest end of the L-8 Canal, the main drainage canal for The Acreage
- Diverting water into Water Conservation Area 1
- Maximizing flow at three major water control structures on the C-51 Canal, helping to move water from the impacted areas
- Deploying nine temporary pumps to help improve drainage from impacted communities
- Gates in the three water conservation areas (WCAs) were fully opened by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The SFWMD is moving water to tide from WCA-1 via S-39 (560 cfs), WCA-2 via S-38 (500 cfs) and WCA-3A via S-31 (300 cfs), depending on local rainfall and drainage conditions.

Staff in the District's Operations Control Room continue to work with the Palm Beach County Emergency Operations Center, Indian Trail Improvement District and local communities to coordinate water operations and bring as much flow as possible from these parts of the system into the appropriate District canals and facilities.

The primary SFWMD flood control system, including pump stations, gates and locks, has fully recovered from the storm and returned to normal wet season operations.

August Rainfall

Following a dry July, Tropical Storm Isaac and wet season rains helped boost District-wide water levels by nearly 4 inches more than the average for the month. An average of 11.43 inches of rain fell from Orlando to the Florida Keys, representing 152 percent of average for the month.

All 16 counties in the District received above average rainfall in August, with the east coast recording the highest numbers. Rainfall in key areas included:

Location	Total Rainfall/Inches	Inches Above Average
Martin/St. Lucie	13.11	5.30
Eastern Palm Beach	16.20	8.40
Eastern Broward	12.45	5.02
Eastern Miami-Dade	12.01	3.75
Lower Kissimmee	12.28	5.36
Southwest Coast	10.40	1.34
East Caloosahatchee	10.44	1.66

As a result of Tropical Storm Isaac and rainfall throughout the month, the water level in Lake Okeechobee rose from 12.12 feet NGVD on July 31 to 13.95 feet NGVD on August 31. The lake level today is 14.55 feet NGVD.

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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.