



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **SFWMD Recognizes April as Water Conservation Month** *March rainfall levels were below average; April is historically a dry month*



*Click on the image to see tips on how to conserve water.*

**West Palm Beach, FL** – Highlighting an ongoing commitment to water conservation, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is observing April as Water Conservation Month. This follows a month of drier-than-average weather and a 2012-2013 dry season that has seen only 50 percent of average rainfall.

“Each year, Water Conservation Month is a helpful reminder that there are many ways to reduce demand on South Florida’s limited water resources,” said SFWMD Executive Director Melissa L. Meeker. “Water conservation has been and will continue to be a critical tool in our water supply planning efforts.”

For 15 consecutive years, Florida has recognized Water Conservation Month in April, the height of the South Florida dry season. While the District is not currently in a water shortage or drought, at least part of the region was in a drought at some point in six of the last eight years. A long-term commitment to water conservation helps to minimize the impact of dry times.

## Dry Season Rainfall Update

Following a Valentine's Day storm that boosted February's rainfall total and regional water supplies, March ended with scant opportunities to recharge the system. An average of only 1.10 inches fell from Orlando to the Florida Keys, representing 35 percent of average, or a deficit of 2.04 inches.

All 16 counties in the District experienced below-average rainfall, with Martin and St. Lucie counties – along with eastern Palm Beach and Broward counties – recording some of the largest deficits. The Southwest Coast also experienced dry conditions, with 0.90 inches of rain representing 31 percent of average, or a deficit of 1.96 inches.

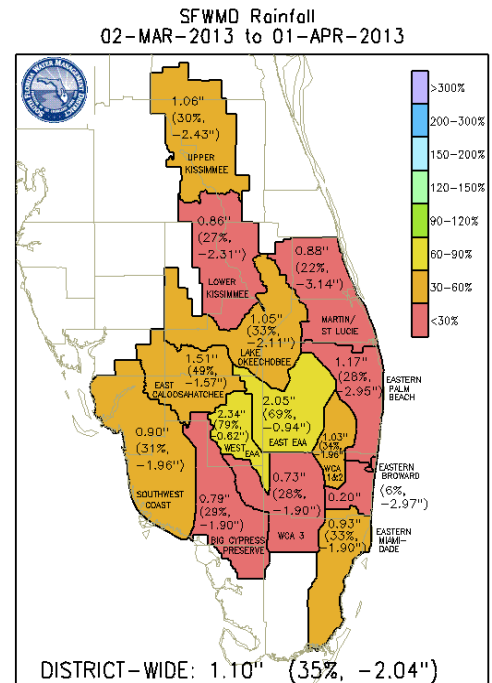
These dry conditions increased the overall 2012-2013 dry season rainfall deficit to 5.77 inches, or 50 percent of average from November 1 to date.

While water levels remain positioned at adequate levels in most areas, evapotranspiration, the loss of water from the ground and growing plants, increases in April, speeding the decline in surface water levels.

## Water Conservation Month events

Throughout April, District staff are participating in a variety of events to raise awareness and promote wise water use.

- The District and the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association will hold the Water Conservation Expo and Vendor Fair on April 12 at District headquarters in West Palm Beach. The event provides guidance for conservation professionals, as well as managers at commercial and institutional facilities, to improve water use efficiency and lower operating costs.
- Community events include:
  - April 6 – Water Fest, City of Stuart in Martin County
  - April 16 – Broward College- South Campus Earth Day, Pembroke Pines in Broward County
  - April 20 – Earth Day on the Avenue, Delray Beach in Palm Beach County
  - April 20 – Earth Fest, City of Coral Springs, Broward County
  - April 27 – Keep Port St. Lucie Beautiful Earth Day event, Port St. Lucie in St. Lucie County



*(Click on the map to see March rainfall.)*

- May 3 – Earth Day at Somerset Academy Silver Palms Charter School in Homestead, Miami-Dade County

### **Water Conservation is a Year-Round Ethic**

Water conservation is essential year-round for addressing the impacts of weather extremes and growing demands on a limited water supply needed by South Florida's 7.7 million residents, economy and environment.

Water conservation can be practiced indoors and outside. Examples include installing a low-flow aerator on your sink, watering the lawn based on its actual needs or installing low-flow appliances, such as a showerhead or energy-efficient washing machine.

When water shortage orders are not in place, the District follows Year-Round Water Conservation Measures that target outdoor irrigation, which accounts for up to half of the water used per person per day in South Florida. The Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Rule is just one of many initiatives implemented under the District's Comprehensive Water Conservation Program.

### **For more information:**

- [SFWMD Weather/Rainfall Data](#)
- [National Weather Service Dry Season Forecast](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center Precipitation Forecast](#)
- [U.S. Drought Monitor](#)
- [SFWMD Water Conservation](#)
- [Year-Round Landscape Irrigation Conservation Measures](#)

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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.*