



NEWS RELEASE

June 3, 2013

CONTACT:

Randy Smith

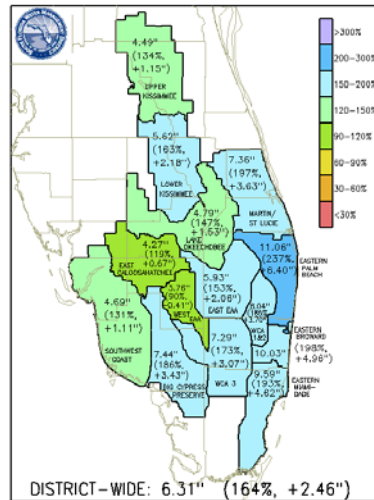
South Florida Water Management District

Office: (561) 682-2800 or Cellular: (561) 389-3386

www.sfwmd.gov/news

follow us on

SFWMD Water Managers Prepare for Wet Week *May was awash with above average rainfall across 16 counties*



- May Rainfall**
- May 2 to June 1
District-wide average = 6.31 inches
 - This is 2.46 inches above average for May
 - Palm Beach County saw 2nd wettest May since 1939
 - (Click on the map for a larger version.)

West Palm Beach, FL – South Florida’s wet season started with a punch as several deluges bolstered the usual rainy season afternoon storms – which began about May 18 – to bring May’s rainfall total in well above average. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has begun typical rainy season operations, including operating canals to maximize room for stormwater runoff.

“As is typical in the wet season, we are responding to rainfall yet always preparing the system for the next event,” said Susan Sylvester, Chief of the Water Control Operations Bureau. “South Floridians know that there is a potential for localized flooding in areas such as roads and parking lots during prolonged or intense rainfall.”

With a forecast of significant rainfall this week, canals in strategic locations have already been lowered to create capacity for expected stormwater runoff. The District is also coordinating with local drainage authorities, whose canal systems move water into the regional District system.

May Rainfall

All 16 counties in the District received above average rainfall in May, with 6.31 inches District-wide, representing 164 percent of average, or 2.46 inches above average.

Florida's east coast received the heaviest deluges, with eastern Palm Beach County receiving the largest amount of May rain in the District. Records show the county experienced its wettest May since 1939, with 11.06 inches accounting for 237 percent of average rainfall, or 6.40 inches above average.

Eastern Broward County was the second wettest in South Florida for the month, receiving 10.03 inches, representing 198 percent of average, or 4.96 inches above average. Martin and St. Lucie counties received 7.36 inches of rain, representing 197 percent of average, or 3.63 inches above average. Eastern Miami-Dade County received 9.59 inches of rain, representing 193 percent of average, or 4.62 inches above average. Despite the large rainfall totals, none of these counties ranked in the top five wettest Mays in their respective histories, according to District records.

The Southwest Coast experienced 4.69 inches of rain, representing 131 percent of average, or 1.11 inches above average.

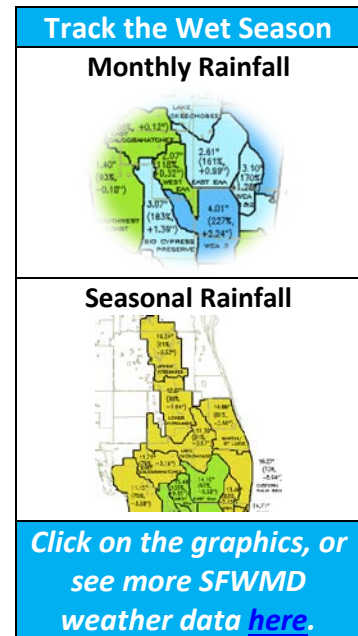
Water Levels

Water levels across the region are at average or slightly above average levels for this time of year. This means South Florida's water supply is well positioned for any possible short-term dry periods.

Lake Okeechobee stood at 13.36 feet NGVD today. This is 0.24 feet higher than its historic average for this time of year. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which manages the lake level with scientific and other input from stakeholders including the District, has been making regulatory releases.

South Florida Wet Season Facts

- On average, South Florida's wet season begins around May 20 and ends around October 13, lasting for 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 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.

#

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.