



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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SFWMD Highlights Flood Control For 'Flood Awareness Month' *June is typically the wettest month in South Florida*



SFWMD has an extensive program of structural maintenance and upgrades that is critical to ensuring the regional flood control system operates at optimal capacity.

West Palm Beach, FL – The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is recognizing June as Flood Awareness Month to raise awareness about the risk of flooding associated with heavy rainfall in South Florida throughout the year and especially during the wet season.

“Heavy rain is inevitable in South Florida, and the region’s primary flood control system is maintained to quickly move water away from communities after storms,” said Tommy Strowd, SFWMD Assistant Executive Director of Operations, Maintenance and Construction. “While the District maintains the primary canals, flood control is a shared responsibility to keep the water flowing through secondary and neighborhood canals away from communities.”

The District’s flood control system frequently handles extreme rainfall, including this week’s Tropical System Andrea, the first named storm of the 2013 hurricane season. The risk of flooding is not confined to the hurricane season, however, as evidenced by the near-record May rainfall that caused localized flooding.

Flood control is an ongoing effort at the District. With recent heavy rainfall at the start of the wet season, canals in strategic locations have 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.

Know the Flow

Flood control in South Florida is a shared responsibility. Residents are encouraged to do their part by:

- Keeping ditches, swales, drainage grates and retention lakes clear of debris, trash and other discarded material.
- Knowing whether a nearby canal is a primary canal maintained by the District or a secondary canal maintained by a municipality or drainage district.
- Reporting the location and condition of any clogged or damaged facilities to the proper authority.
- Making sure trees or other vegetation do not encroach on canal maintenance right-of-way.

Maintenance: Keeping the Flow Going

The District has an extensive program of structural maintenance and upgrades that is critical to ensuring the regional flood control system operates at optimal capacity. The extensive regional flood control system includes nearly 2,000 miles of canals and 2,800 miles of levees and berms. District crews also regularly inspect the approximately 645 water control structures and 69 pump stations.

Recent essential maintenance work includes:

- Hardening and overhauling pump stations
- Overhauling gated spillways
- Replacing project culverts
- Dredging canals
- Stabilizing canal banks
- Enhancing Stormwater Treatment Areas

For more information, visit the following resources:

- [Rainy Season Readiness](#)
- [Managing Flood Water Before and After the Storm](#)
- Follow the District's Twitter feed: [@SFWMD](#)

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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.