

2011 WATER WATCH

Keeping an Eye on Water Resources

District-Wide Conditions for October 3, 2011

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is issuing the following briefing:

Rainfall totals over the last few months are near normal levels, but Lake Okeechobee and groundwater levels in many areas remain low due to a below-average dry period that lasted from October 2010 until June 2011. In the last few days, rainfall and inflows to the lake were not enough to compensate for evapotranspiration, resulting in a slight drop in the lake level from 11.14 feet NGVD on Saturday to 11.11 feet today.

Unless there is significant tropical rainfall in the coming weeks, the region is expected to remain in a water shortage through the spring. The District is storing as much water as possible during this wet season. However, not all rainfall can be retained due to limited storage options and the need for local flood protection. Historically, South Florida's transition into the dry season begins this month.

Lake Okeechobee Levels

Today	11.11 feet
Historical Average for Today	14.91 feet
This Date One Year Ago	14.09 feet
One Week Ago	11.05 feet
Deficit Below Water Shortage Line	1.88 feet

Water Levels in Key Locations (as of October 3, 2011)

LOCATION	WATER LEVEL	THIS DATE LAST YEAR
Lake Istokpoga	39.23 feet	38.98 feet
WCA-1	15.76 feet	17.00 feet
WCA-2	13.41 feet	13.12 feet
WCA-3	10.05 feet	10.65 feet
Lake Kissimmee	52.24 feet	51.11 feet
For a map of wet season rainfall totals since June 1 in all District basins, click here .		

Water Shortage Orders and Conservation Measures

- [Modified Phase II restrictions](#), effective March 26, limit landscape irrigation to two days per week throughout the District.

- [Modified Phase III restrictions](#), effective June 10, limit landscape irrigation to one day per week in the City of West Palm Beach's utility service area, including the City of West Palm Beach and the towns of South Palm Beach and Palm Beach.
- On June 13, the West Palm Beach City Commission implemented additional emergency restrictions for its utility service area. The resolution can be viewed [here](#).
- Landscape irrigation using reclaimed water is not restricted under the orders. Additional watering is permitted for new plantings.
- Irrigation times vary by area:
 - For Broward, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties. Also for portions of Osceola County within the SFWMD boundaries, the Town of Windermere in Orange County, cities within Lee County except Cape Coral and Palm Beach County except areas served by the West Palm Beach utility – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Charlotte, Highlands and Polk counties – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Toho Water Authority Service Area (Osceola County) – [Just the Facts](#)
 - The City of Cape Coral – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Collier County – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Orange County, except the Town of Windermere – [Just the Facts](#)
 - Unincorporated areas of Lee County – [Just the Facts](#)

Water Shortage Order – Golf Courses

- [Modified Phase I restrictions](#), effective March 26, require a 15-percent cutback for golf course irrigation in Broward, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties.
 - Effective Aug. 7 through Oct. 31, a [temporary modification](#) allows golf courses to apply for a variance if needed for new plantings or other course rehabilitation.

Water Shortage Order – Lake Okeechobee Service Area (LOSA)

- [Modified Phase III restrictions](#), effective May 19, require a 45-percent reduction in surface water withdrawals for all agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment users within LOSA, which includes portions of Okeechobee, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties and the Everglades Agricultural Area.

Water Shortage Order – Agricultural and Nursery Water Users in South Miami-Dade County

- A [water shortage order](#), effective March 26, places Phase I restrictions on agricultural and nursery water users within the South Dade Water Use Basin. Users shall limit the times and hours of irrigation operations.

Water Shortage Order – Southern Portion of the Indian Prairie Water Use Basin

- An [operational order](#), effective March 26, allows for District operation of certain bypass structures in the southern portion of the Indian Prairie Water Use Basin.
- A [water shortage order](#) requires a 15-percent reduction in surface water withdrawals for all agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment users.

Water Shortage Order – Permitted Water Users in Broward and Palm Beach Counties

- A [water shortage order](#), effective March 26, places Phase I restrictions on agricultural, nursery and diversion and impoundment permittees that use or divert surface and ground water in these counties.
 - Withdrawals from surface waters by specified users are reduced 15 percent.
 - Agricultural and nursery operations shall limit the hours of irrigation.

Other Actions

Navigation

- Starting Oct. 1, the S-193 navigation lock at Taylor Creek reopened on Saturdays and Sundays from 5:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
- These locks on the north shore of Lake Okeechobee remain closed:
 - S-135 at J&S Fish Camp in Martin County
 - G-36 at Henry Creek in Okeechobee County
 - S-127 at Buckhead Ridge in Glades County
 - S-131 at Lakeport in Glades County

Hurricane Season (June 1 to November 30)

- In preparation for storms, residents are encouraged to check swales and drainage systems to ensure that there are no blockages to impede water flow. Land adjacent to canal embankments must be clear of shrubs and other encroaching objects.

Information about water shortage orders and warnings, current weather and water conditions and water-saving tips can be found at www.sfwmd.gov/waterwatch.

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**Water shortage questions from the public can be directed to:
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