

South Carolina Current Drought Status

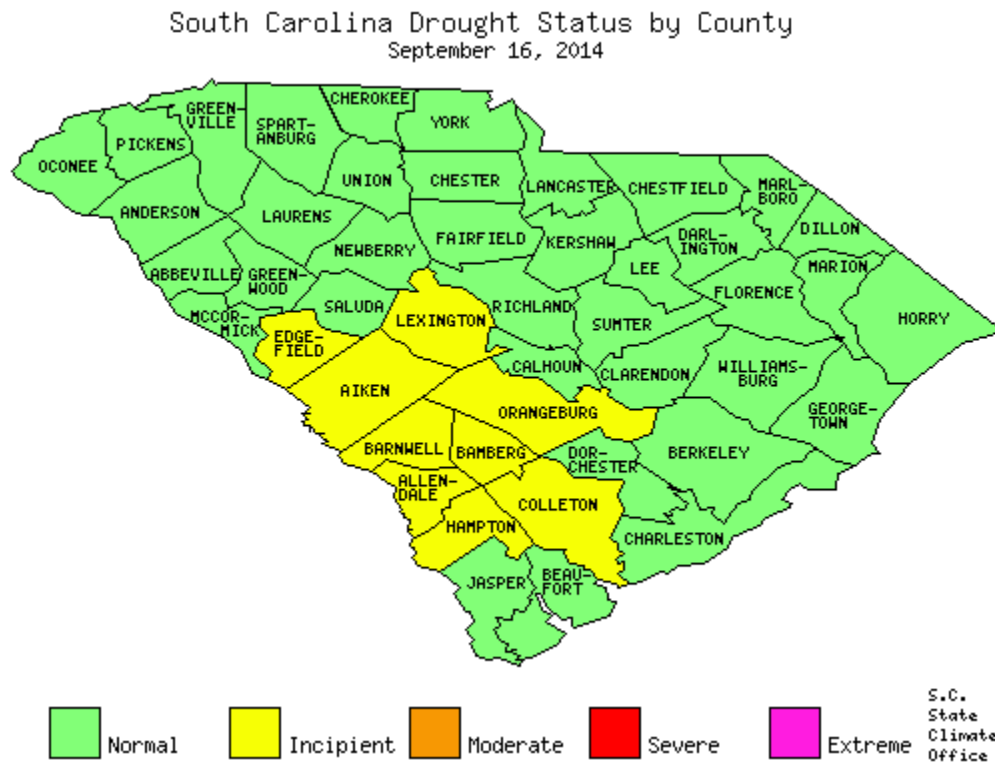
State Climate Office

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September 16, 2014

South Carolina Drought Committee upgrades drought status for 9 counties



The S.C. Drought Response Committee, meeting via conference call on Sept. 16, upgraded the drought status to the first level of drought for 9 counties, Edgefield, Aiken, Lexington, Barnwell, Allendale, Bamberg, Orangeburg, Hampton, and Colleton.

This was the first drought declaration issued since April 2013. According to the S.C. State Climatologist, Hope Mizzell, rainfall totals since June 1 have varied across the state from less than 9" to over 34". Aiken's June 1 to Sept. 15 rainfall total of 8.79" was the third driest for that site since 1925 while many coastal sites reported over 30" of rain since June 1. This made decisions for some coastal counties like Colleton difficult. The Committee votes by county and conditions for inland Colleton were much drier than along the coastal areas.

The persistent below normal rainfall and resulting hydrologic impacts in the 9 counties led the SC Drought Response Committee to issue the incipient drought declaration. The incipient drought declaration is followed by increasing levels of severity to moderate, severe and extreme status.

The Edisto and Salkehatchie River Basins have been the driest overall experiencing persistent low streamflow conditions over much of the past two to three months, reported Scott Harder, S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Hydrologist. This was the main driver for declaring an incipient drought for counties in these basins.

According to David Baize, Assistant Bureau Chief for the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control's Bureau of Water, there have been no reports of water supply problems statewide. Agricultural representatives on the call reported scattered agricultural impacts due to the drought, but it has been highly variable. Darryl Jones with the S.C. Forestry Commission reported, "Wildfire occurrence has been light this summer, but as the growing season ends and fuels begin to cure, fire activity is likely to increase. In areas where drought is developing, wildfires may be more difficult to control and spread faster as vegetation dries out."

Drought Response Committee Chairman Ken Rentiers stated, "The Committee will continue to monitor the situation closely and if conditions deteriorate. DNR will reconvene the committee as needed.

DNR protects and manages South Carolina's natural resources by making wise and balanced decisions for the benefit of the state's natural resources and its people. Find out more about DNR at [the DNR Web site](#).

Drought Status: 09-16-2014

County	Status
Abbeville	Normal
Aiken	Incipient
Allendale	Incipient
Anderson	Normal
Bamberg	Incipient
Barnwell	Incipient
Beaufort	Normal
Berkeley	Normal
Calhoun	Normal
Charleston	Normal
Cherokee	Normal
Chester	Normal
Chesterfield	Normal
Clarendon	Normal
Colleton	Incipient
Darlington	Normal
Dillon	Normal
Dorchester	Normal
Edgefield	Incipient
Fairfield	Normal
Florence	Normal
Georgetown	Normal
Greenville	Normal
Greenwood	Normal
Hampton	Incipient
Horry	Normal
Jasper	Normal
Kershaw	Normal
Lancaster	Normal
Laurens	Normal
Lee	Normal
Lexington	Incipient
Marion	Normal

County	Status
Marlboro	Normal
McCormick	Normal
Newberry	Normal
Oconee	Normal
Orangeburg	Incipient
Pickens	Normal
Richland	Normal
Saluda	Normal
Spartanburg	Normal
Sumter	Normal
Union	Normal
Williamsburg	Normal
York	Normal