

# South Carolina Current Drought Status

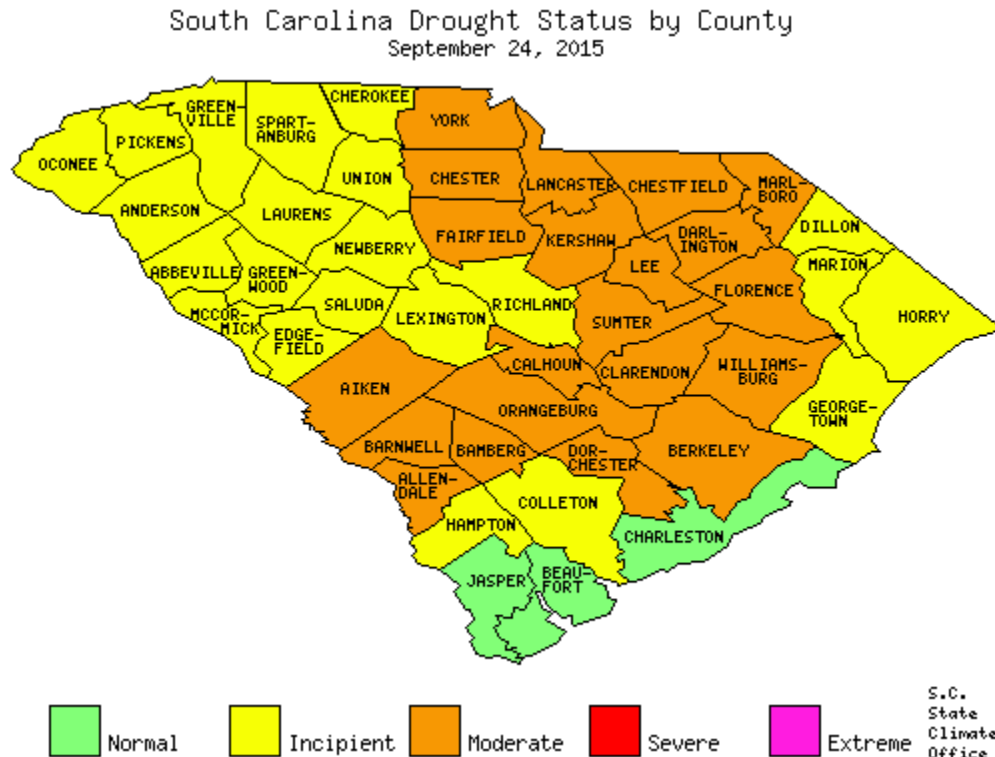
State Climate Office

NEWS RELEASE

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September 24, 2015

## Committee downgrades drought for coastal counties, optimistic for more with forecast heavy rain



The S.C. Drought Response Committee, meeting via conference call on Sept. 24, 2015, has downgraded the drought status of the coastal counties of South Carolina. Counties throughout the rest of the state remain in either incipient or moderate status, although the Committee is optimistic for more downgrades with the forecast of heavy rain around the state. The Committee removed the drought status from Charleston County due to recent significant precipitation with some areas of the county receiving over 16.00" inches in the last 60 days. Jasper and Beaufort counties were also downgraded to no drought status due to, for example, Daufuskie Island receiving 23.13 inches since mid-July. Dillon, Marion, Horry, Georgetown, Colleton and Hampton counties were also downgraded from moderate to the first level of drought or incipient.

The following counties remain at moderate: Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell, Bamberg, Berkeley, Calhoun, Chester, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dorchester, Fairfield, Florence, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Marlboro, Orangeburg, Sumter, Williamsburg and York. Anderson, Abbeville, Cherokee, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick,

Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Richland, Saluda, Spartanburg and Union counties remain in incipient.

Previously on July 26, the Committee designated all counties to either incipient or moderate status. As rain was once again falling across South Carolina coastal counties, it was an easy decision for the Drought Committee to downgrade the drought status in all coastal counties. There was a longer discussion about the Upstate drought conditions. According to Hope Mizzell, S.C. State Climatologist, "It has been very dry for many areas across the Upstate. However, the Committee was hesitant today to make any major changes due to the potential for heavy rain in the forecast. The rainfall expected over the next few days has the potential to be the largest and most widespread since June 1." The Committee decided to delay upgrading or downgrading the drought status in most counties due to the pending rainfall, but will reevaluate on October 5, 2015. Brad Powers, Blue Ridge Rural Water Company, emphasized, "Much of the Upstate of South Carolina is currently in a moderate drought state, but with the forecast rainfall over the next several days, the Central South Carolina Drought Response Committee feels that leaving the Upstate at incipient, until our next scheduled meeting, is best. If the Upstate fails to receive the forecasted rainfall, I would recommend moving the Upstate part of the Central Drought Area to moderate drought status."

"The forecast for the next week indicates precipitation for the Yadkin-Pee Dee, Catawba-Wateree and Keowee-Toxaway lakes, but without significant rainfall, levels are expected to continue declining for the foreseeable future and well into the fall," George Galleher, principal engineer with Duke Energy.

Drought Response Committee Chairman Ken Rentiers stated, "With the forecast of rain over the next several days, we are cautiously optimistic drought conditions, for at least some parts of the state, will improve and so the committee is expected to reconvene on October 5."

Contact Dr. Mizzell in Columbia at (803) 734-9568 or e-mail at [mizzellh@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:mizzellh@dnr.sc.gov) for more information.

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: 09-24-2015**

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

<b>County</b>	<b>Status</b>
Marlboro	Moderate
McCormick	Incipient
Newberry	Incipient
Oconee	Incipient
Orangeburg	Moderate
Pickens	Incipient
Richland	Incipient
Saluda	Incipient
Spartanburg	Incipient
Sumter	Moderate
Union	Incipient
Williamsburg	Moderate
York	Moderate