

# Drought Monitoring and Response

## in South Carolina

**Why:** To carefully and closely monitor, conserve, and manage the State's water resources in the best interests of all South Carolinians.

**Who:** Drought Response Committee (DRC) and  
Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR)- State Climatology Office (SCO)

**Statewide members**

- Forestry Commission
- Department of Agriculture
- Emergency Management Division
- Department of Health and Environmental Control
- Department of Natural Resources

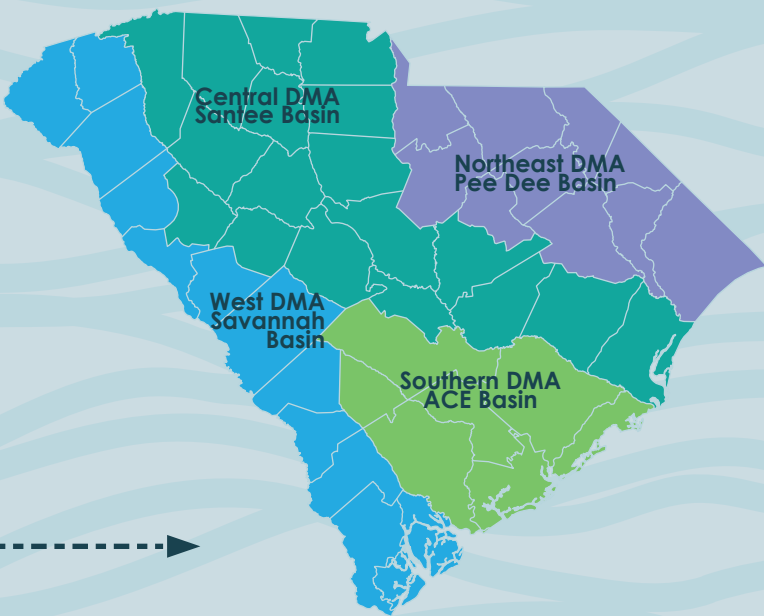
**Local members**

- Water Utilities
- Local Governments
- Power Generation Facilities
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts

### When and Where:

The State Climatology Office routinely monitors climatic conditions in the State.

The Drought Response Committee meets when needed to evaluate conditions and impacts within four Drought Management Areas. (DMA)



**How:** South Carolina uses multiple indicators and indices to monitor drought and determine drought severity levels.



**Percent of Normal Rainfall**

- Cumulative dryness or wetness compared to long-term averages



**Crop Moisture Index**

- Short-term (up to 4 weeks) dryness or wetness during the agricultural growing season



**Palmer Drought Severity Index**

- Prolonged (month, years) abnormally dry or wet conditions



**Streamflow levels**



**Lake and reservoir levels**



**Groundwater levels**

} **Water Resources**



**Keetch-Byram Drought Index**

- Daily measure of forest fire threat



**US Drought Monitor for SC**

- General areas of drought, labeled by intensity on a weekly basis

### Conditions and Response:

Increasingly severe conditions occur as a drought progresses. Each drought level initiates a range of responses.

Conditions	Incipient	Moderate	Severe	Extreme
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drier than normal</li><li>• Soil moisture declines</li><li>• Water demand increases</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water levels decrease</li><li>• Crops and plants wither</li><li>• Irrigation increases</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water levels continue to drop</li><li>• Number of wildfires increases</li><li>• Poor grazing and agricultural conditions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Widespread impacts to agriculture, forestry, water utilities, and water dependent businesses</li></ul>
	SCDNR, SCO and DRC monitor conditions, share information, and make recommendations to manage drought. State and federal agencies, water utilities, and reservoir managers monitor conditions.			
	Water utilities review drought plans and ordinances.	Water utilities implement drought plans and ordinances. DRC may recommend voluntary or mandatory water conservation.		
	As drought conditions and impacts become more severe, response actions increase accordingly.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State agencies increase monitoring and communications.</li><li>• Citizens may see local notices for burn bans, boat ramp closings, and water use restrictions.</li><li>• The Governor may request voluntary or mandatory water conservation.</li><li>• The Governor may assist with managing impacts, including requesting disaster declarations by the US Dept. of Agriculture and activating the National Guard to assist with wildfire suppression.</li></ul>	
Response	<div><div>Emergency Operations</div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water systems and citizens are without, or losing access to, water.</li><li>• Public safety, health, and welfare are threatened.</li><li>• The State Emergency Response Team (SERT) is activated to lead state-level response to the water shortage emergency.</li></ul></div>			

Sources	South Carolina Drought Response Act (2000) Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, § 49-23-10 et seq., as amended.
	Regulations for the South Carolina Drought Response Act (2002) Code of State Regulations of South Carolina, 2000, § 121-11 et seq., as amended.
	SC Drought Response Plan (2017)

To view current drought status and conditions in South Carolina, visit: [scdrought.com/current.html](http://scdrought.com/current.html)



<http://www.scdrought.com>



<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/climate/sco>



<https://www.cisa.sc.edu>