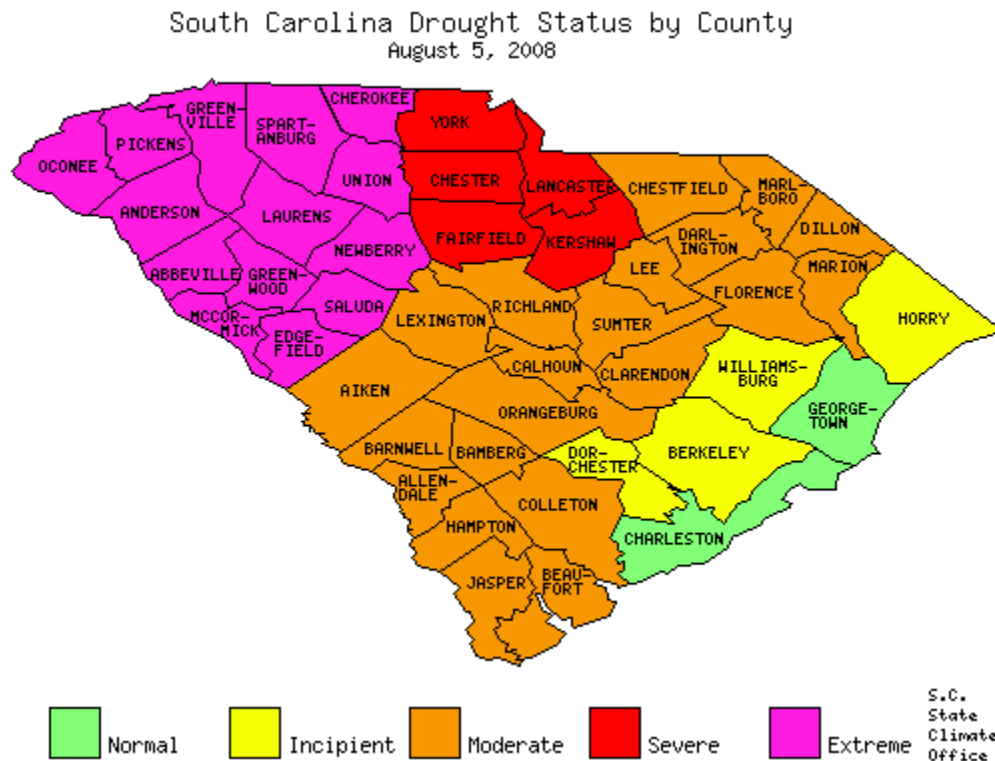


# South Carolina Current Drought Status

State Climate Office 803-734-9100  
SPECIAL NEWS RELEASE #8-15 DNR News 803-734-3815  
August 5, 2008

[Governor, DNR urge voluntary water conservation](#)

## 'EXTREME' DROUGHT STATUS EXPANDED TO INCLUDE 14 WESTERN COUNTIES.



### Discussion:

Planning by local water systems, along with conservation measures taken by upstate residents, were lauded by officials Tuesday as the state drought committee added nine upstate counties to the extreme drought category.

But with no significant relief in sight in terms of rainfall, the South Carolina Drought Response Committee determined that to help protect existing water supplies:

- Water systems, businesses and individuals in the extreme drought counties should implement aggressive conservation measures;

- Water systems need to immediately contact the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) if they anticipate water supply problems;
- Water systems should notify the DNR Drought Information Center regarding the success of their conservation actions.

"Timely planning by local water systems and conservation measures taken by many upstate citizens are helping to keep most drinking water supplies at adequate levels," said Steve de Kozlowski, Interim Deputy Director for DNR's Land, Water Conservation Division.

Much-below-normal rainfall, declining hydrologic conditions, and significant impacts to agriculture led the committee to move nine more upstate counties into the extreme drought category: Anderson, Abbeville, McCormick, Edgefield, Saluda, Greenwood, Laurens, Newberry and Laurens. These counties join five other counties that were declared in extreme drought on June 30: Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg.

Two coastal counties that have seen abundant rainfall in recent weeks, Charleston and Georgetown, were removed by the committee from being in a drought category altogether.

The state drought committee did not impose any mandatory water-use and withdrawal restrictions, but did encourage water systems, businesses and individuals in the extreme drought areas to "implement aggressive conservation measures" to reduce water use as much as possible. The committee will meet again in a month to review conditions and determine if additional actions to conserve water are needed.

Most water systems across the upstate have introduced voluntary water conservation measures, and some reported success stories during Tuesday's drought committee meeting. The Spartanburg Water System saw its water use lowered by 10 to 15 percent due to conservation measures taken by its customers, while SJWD reported an 18 percent reduction by voluntary conservation efforts.

Hope Mizzell, S.C. State Climatologist, pointed out that while the rainfall pattern over the past 30 days has improved for areas from the midlands to the coast the upstate's serious drought conditions persist.

"Upstate agriculture is really suffering," said Larry Boyleston of the S.C. Department of Agriculture. "Hay farmers and cattle producers have been especially hard hit due to the drought." Upstate cattle producers are already feeding hay to their cattle, due to the lack of grass in pasturelands, whereas hay is not usually used as a feed supplement for cattle until fall or winter.

Drought conditions have increased the intensity of wildfires, resulting in a higher number of acres burned, according to Darryl Jones with the S.C. Forestry Commission. The fiscal year, which ended June 30, produced a 19.5 percent increase in South Carolina wildfires over the five-year average, according to Jones.

For more drought information contact State Climatologist Hope Mizzell in Columbia at (803) 734-9568 or e-mail [MizzellH@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:MizzellH@dnr.sc.gov).

**Drought Status: 08-05-2008**

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

County	Status
Lee	Moderate
Lexington	Moderate
Marion	Moderate
Marlboro	Moderate
McCormick	Extreme
Newberry	Extreme
Oconee	Extreme
Orangeburg	Moderate
Pickens	Extreme
Richland	Moderate
Saluda	Extreme
Spartanburg	Extreme
Sumter	Moderate
Union	Extreme
Williamsburg	Incipient
York	Severe