

South Carolina Current Drought Status

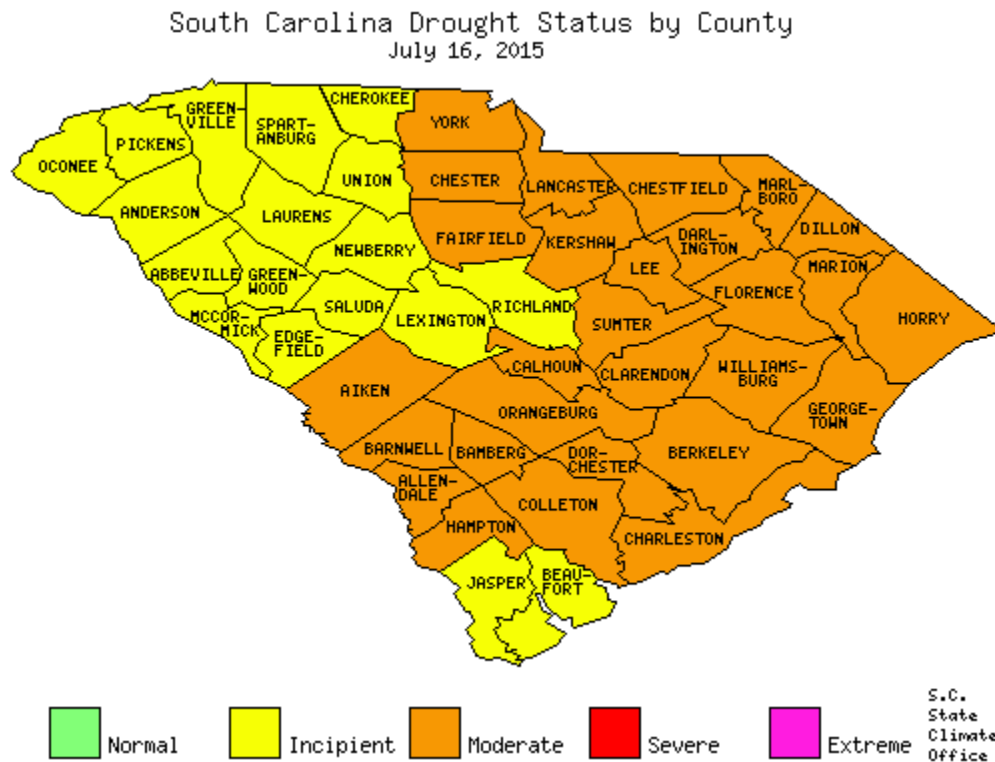
State Climate Office

NEWS RELEASE

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July 16, 2015

All of South Carolina now under drought status



The S.C. Drought Response Committee, meeting via conference call on July 16, has upgraded the drought status of the entire state. Previously on June 19 the committee had designated 28 counties to the first level of drought. Those counties are now in the second or moderate stage of drought.

The counties upgraded to the moderate stage of drought include Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell, Bamberg, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Chester, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dillon, Dorchester, Fairfield, Florence, Georgetown, Hampton, Horry, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Orangeburg, Sumter, Williamsburg and York. All other counties in South Carolina are now in the first level of drought or incipient.

The purpose of the moderate declaration is to increase awareness that drought conditions are intensifying. Water systems are asked to review their Drought Response Plans and Ordinances and implement as needed.

"It's clear that drought is affecting folks all across the state. Irrigation has helped provide moisture to some crops, but it doesn't replace a good soaking rain," said S.C. Department of

Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers. "This summer's weather further illustrates the partnership that farmers have with Mother Nature. The short-term forecast isn't optimistic, but we'll continue to pray for relief from the heat and drought."

"Duke Energy strongly supports the Drought Committee's moving the drought classification to moderate based on the very low stream flows, dry soil moisture and widespread low rainfall amounts over the last 30 days. Duke Energy is concerned with lake levels and is carefully managing hydroelectric operations under these conditions," stated George Galleher, principal engineer with Duke Energy.

"Due to below normal rainfall over the past several months, streamflow levels have dropped considerably and are well below normal for this time of year," reported Scott Harder, S.C. Department of Natural Resources hydrologist. "These low streamflows have caused small but steady declines in most of the state's major reservoirs and most of the reservoirs are currently below their target levels."

Bobby Brock with the Marlboro Water Company and Northeast Drought Committee said, "Several farmers in Marlboro County agree that the combination of hot weather and lack of rainfall is having an impact on their farming operations, particular those without irrigation. It certainly has affected the corn crop and will impact peanuts and soybeans if we do not get rain soon."

According to Hope Mizzell, SC State Climatologist, "Rainfall totals within each county are highly variable, for example in York County some areas are reporting less than 2" since June 1 while others have received over 7". Since our last Drought Committee meeting in mid-June, rainfall totals have decreased statewide. The drought impacts have been intensified due to the much above normal temperatures."

Select National Weather Service Cooperative Network rainfall totals and departure from normal values for the period June 15 – July 15 are provided below:

June 15-July 15, 2015 Rainfall Totals and Percent of Normal Values

STATION NAME	RAINFALL (Inches)	% OF NORMAL	STATION NAME	RAINFALL (Inches)	% OF NORMAL
Winnsboro	0.58	14	Wateree Dam	2.71	62
Greenville	0.89	21	Walterboro 1 SW	3.94	72
Santuck	0.96	23	Columbia Metro	4.01	73
Chester 1 SE	1.39	31	Bamberg	4.02	74
Cleveland 3S	1.66	32	Anderson	2.60	75
Pickens	1.45	33	Jocassee 8 WNW	5.37	77
Johnston 4SW	1.57	35	Sumter	4.43	77
Newberry	1.62	37	Charleston AFB	4.88	78

Cheraw	2.32	44	Manning	4.10	78
Orangeburg 2	2.65	51	Florence	3.81	78
Andrews	2.74	52	Marion	4.91	94
Caesars Head	3.79	57	Walhalla	5.49	122

Drought Response Committee Chairman Ken Rentiers stated, "The Committee will continue to monitor the situation closely and if conditions deteriorate the S.C. Department of Natural Resources will reconvene the committee as needed."

Drought Status: 07-16-2015

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

County	Status
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

