

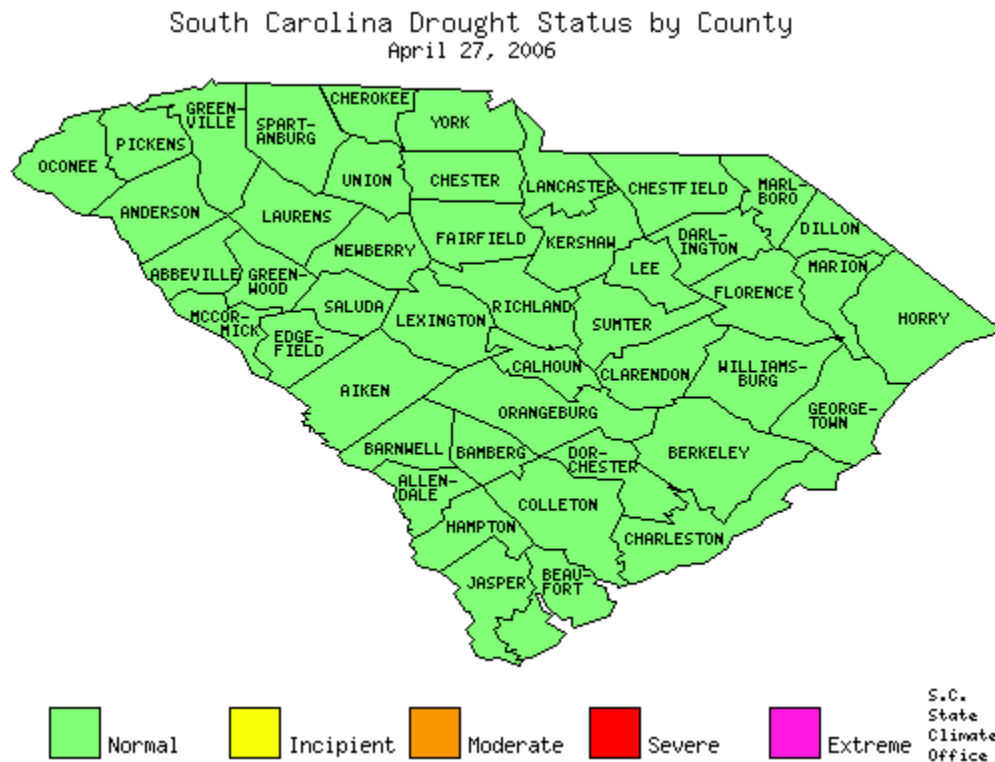
South Carolina Current Drought Status

State Climate Office (803) 734-9100

SPECIAL NEWS RELEASE

Statement Date: April 27, 2006:

Drought Response Committee delays drought declaration



State agency representatives on the State Drought Response Committee decided April 27 to delay making any drought declaration, but to increase the monitoring of drought indices and to reconsider the possibility of drought declaration in two weeks if no significant rains have begun.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) convened state agency members of the S.C. Drought Response Committee Thursday, April 27, in Columbia to evaluate the overall statewide conditions. Much of the state has received beneficial rainfall over the past five days with Kingstree reporting 3.09", Charleston 1.32", Walterboro 1.43", Greenville-Spartanburg 1.66", and Anderson 1.43". There are a few locations, however, that just missed the rain reporting less than 0.50" such as reports from the Columbia Airport, Darlington, and Aiken.

"We are certainly not yet experiencing the dire conditions experienced during the record drought of 1998-2002, but everyone needs to be aware of the potential for drought at least in some areas of the state," said Hope Mizzell, S.C. State Climatologist with the DNR.

DNR hydrologist Masaaki Kiuchi reported that 14 of 17 stream gauging stations are low for April, but that all major lakes are close to normal levels. Rob Devlin, with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, said that no public or industrial water systems are reporting any supply problems at this time. S.C. Forestry Commission fire expert, Darryl Jones, says the recent dry weather has forestry officials paying close attention. The number of forest fires and acres burned this year are close to the ten-year average, but a prolonged rainfall deficit could lead to an increase in the occurrence of wildfires, as well as other forest health concerns. Trees under stress from a lack of rainfall or water table fluctuation can become more susceptible to damage from bark beetles, defoliators, and saltwater influx into the soil.

Should a drought declaration need to be made later, an incipient drought declaration is the first level of drought followed by moderate, severe, and extreme. During incipient drought, the DNR activates the Drought Information Center, increases monitoring and notification of the drought status.

Drought Status: 04-27-2006

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

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