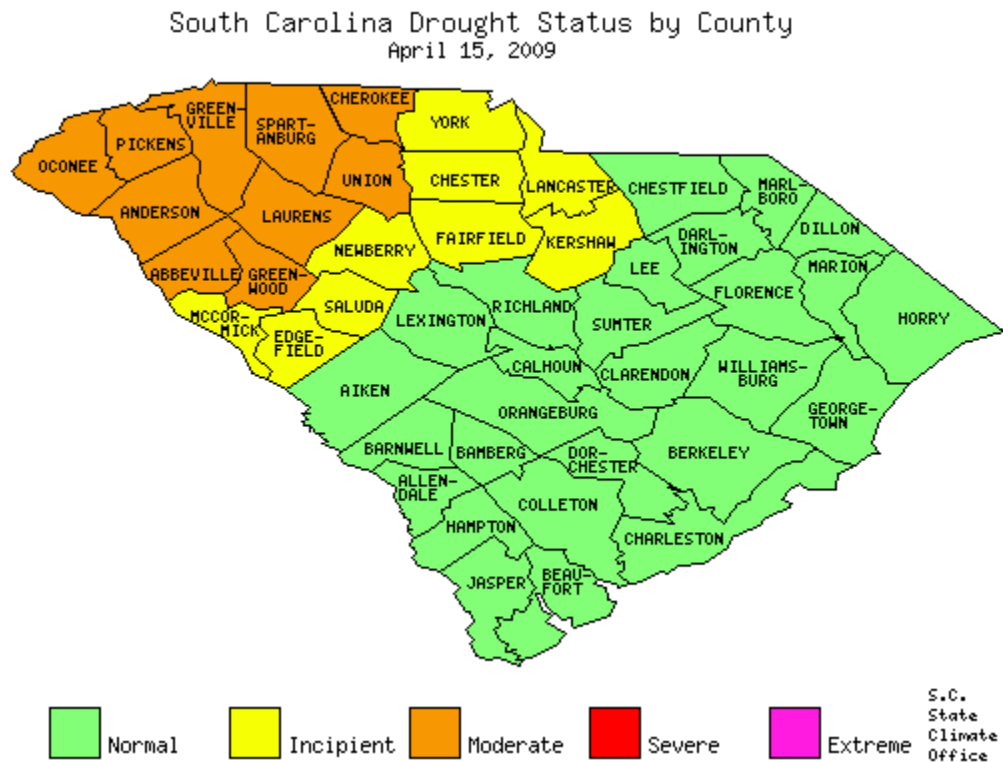


South Carolina Current Drought Status

State Climate Office 803-734-9100
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27 OF STATE'S COUNTIES NOW WITH NO DROUGHT STATUS



Discussion:

[Minutes from the April 15, 2009 S.C. Drought Response Committee meeting \(.pdf\).](#)

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources convened the S.C. Drought Response Committee on April 15 in Columbia. All areas of the state received much-needed rainfall over the past several weeks, prompting the Drought Response Committee to reduce the drought severity level statewide. These recent much above normal rain events can be deceptive, giving the impression the drought is over; however, groundwater levels have not recharged completely in those counties where the drought was maintained.

The counties downgraded to the moderate category are Oconee, Pickens, Greenville, Spartanburg, Anderson, Abbeville, Laurens, Greenwood, Union and Cherokee. The nine counties downgraded to incipient drought are Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, McCormick, Newberry, Saluda and York.

The drought declaration was removed completely from counties in the southern Midlands, along the coast and in the Pee Dee region. For more information about drought and to see a drought status by county map, visit the Office of State Climatology [drought Web site](#).

According to DNR hydrologist Masaaki Kiuchi all 17 statewide stream flow gauges show no drought, "Lake levels around South Carolina are normal except in the Savannah River Basin which is still well below normal although recent precipitation has improved lake levels."

Darryl Jones with the S.C. Forestry Commission says fire season began as a busy one, but he is cautiously optimistic, "We received rain frequently enough in March and April to lower the number of wildfires around the state. If we continue to receive regular rainfall, we should make it through the rest of the traditional wildfire season with a moderate number of fires."

West Drought Management Area committee member Dennis Chastain of Pickens urged the public to look at the broader picture given the recent precipitation around the state, "Certainly we are much better going into spring and summer than we had anticipated, but the public needs to look below the surface and realize we are still in a ten-year drought cycle. We need a substantial improvement in rainfall to recharge groundwater to anything like normal."

Northeast Drought Management Area committee member Mike Hancock from Lugoff-Elgin Water Authority stated, "While most of the drought indices we consider show improvement, we encourage continued voluntary water conservation measures."

"The SC Department of Natural Resources will closely monitor the drought status and if rainfall is reduced the committee will promptly reconvene," said Ken Rentiers, Deputy Director, Land, Water and Conservation Division.

Contact South Carolina State Climatologist Dr. Hope Mizzell in Columbia at (803) 734-9568 or e-mail at 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 Table

Current Drought Status by County				
Normal	Incipient	Moderate	Severe	Extreme
County Status	County Status	County Status	County Status	County Status
ABBEVILLE Moderate	AIKEN Normal	ALLENDALE Normal	ANDERSON Moderate	BAMBERG Normal
BARNWELL Normal	BEAUFORT Normal	BERKELEY Normal	CALHOUN Normal	CHARLESTON Normal
CHEROKEE Moderate	CHESTER Incipient	CHESTERFIELD Normal	CLARENDON Normal	COLLETON Normal
DARLINGTON Normal	DILLON Normal	DORCHESTER Normal	EDGEFIELD Incipient	FAIRFIELD Incipient
FLORENCE Normal	GEORGETOWN Normal	GREENVILLE Moderate	GREENWOOD Moderate	HAMPTON Normal
HORRY Normal	JASPER Normal	KERSHAW Incipient	LANCASTER Incipient	LAURENS Moderate
LEE Normal	LEXINGTON Normal	MARION Normal	MARLBORO Normal	MCCORMICK Incipient
NEWBERRY Incipient	OCONEE Moderate	ORANGEBURG Normal	PICKENS Moderate	RICHLAND Normal
SALUDA Incipient	SPARTANBURG Moderate	SUMTER Normal	UNION Moderate	WILLIAMSBURG Normal
YORK Incipient				