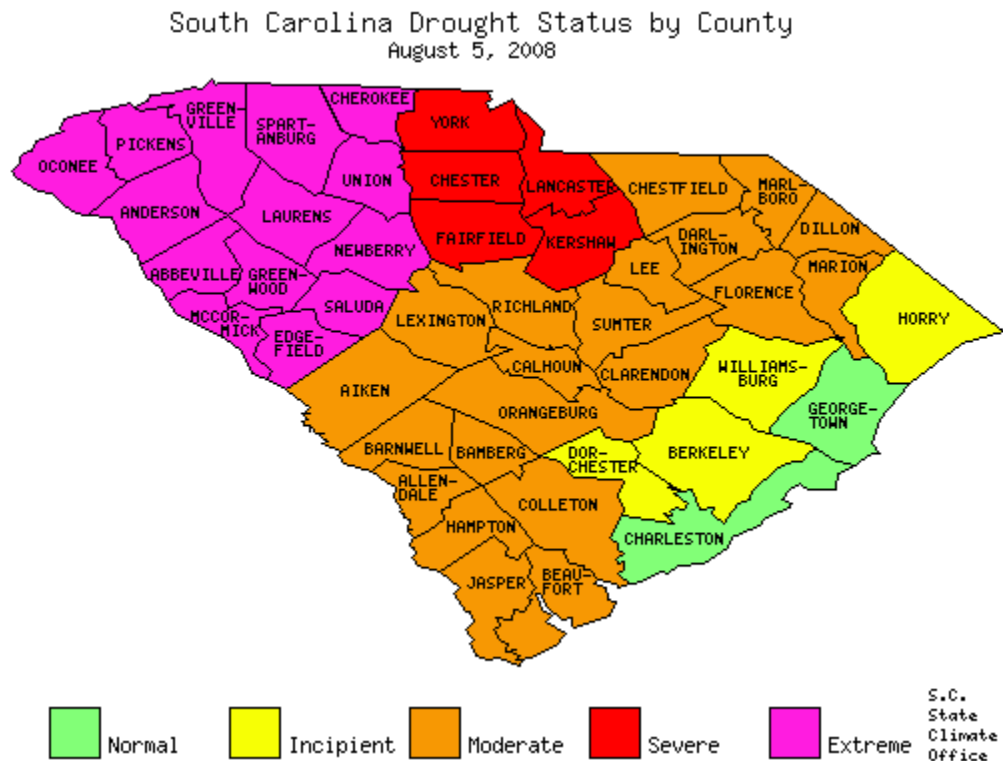


South Carolina Current Drought Status

State Climate Office 803-734-9100
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[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.

Drought Status Table

Current Drought Status by County				
Normal	Incipient	Moderate	Severe	Extreme
County Status	County Status	County Status	County Status	County Status
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
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				