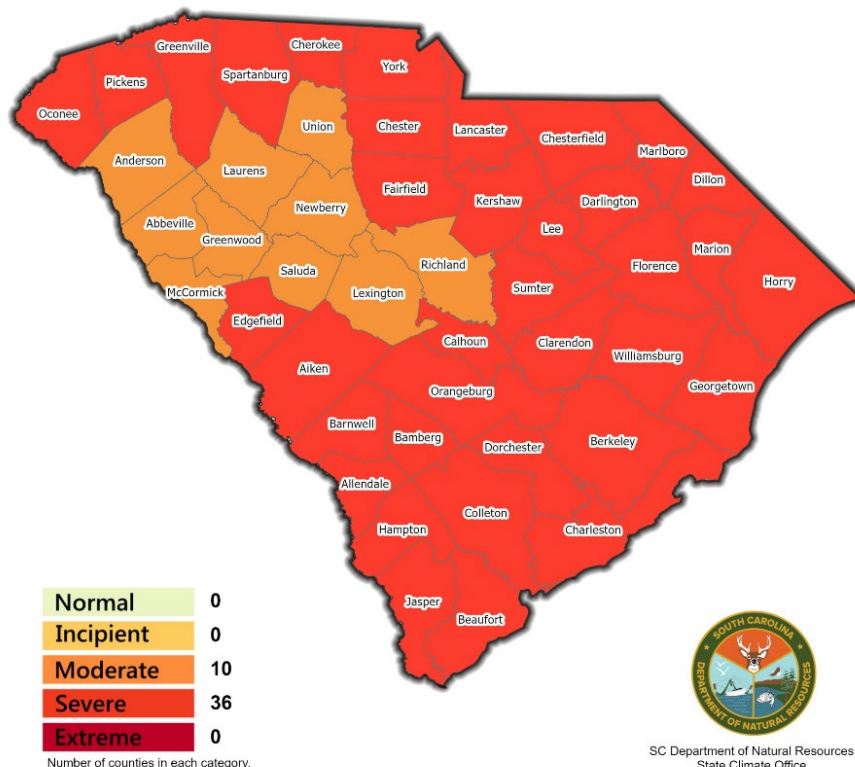


Drought Continues Statewide

July 8, 2026

The South Carolina Drought Response Committee (DRC) met on July 8, 2026, to evaluate drought conditions statewide. The DRC is the state's major drought decision making entity and determines drought severity as defined by the S.C. Drought Response Act to protect the state's natural resources. The act establishes four levels of drought: incipient, moderate, severe, and extreme. For more information about the DRC and the SC Drought Response Program, visit scdrought.com.

Drought Status: 07-08-2026



The Drought Response Committee (DRC) reviewed whether any counties should be upgraded to the fourth and highest level, extreme drought, with 35 counties already at the third-highest level. After closely reviewing drought indicators and impact reports, the Committee decided that conditions had not reached the level of extreme drought in any county. The DRC maintained moderate drought status for 10 counties (Abbeville, Anderson, Greenwood, Laurens, Lexington, McCormick, Newberry, Richland, Saluda, and Union), upgraded Edgefield from moderate drought to severe drought conditions, and kept all other counties in severe drought status. No locations in South Carolina have reached extreme drought status since February 2009. However,

there are concerns parts of South Carolina may reach the extreme drought status this summer with the persistent pattern of below-normal rainfall and extreme heat.

Statewide rainfall has been below normal for eight out of the past ten months. Rainfall deficits, since January 1st, have exceeded 12 inches in some locations. The only months with normal to above normal rainfall, since August 2025, were October 2025 and May 2026. A few isolated locations received normal to above normal rainfall since June 1st, but the rainfall range has been highly variable, even within individual counties (See Table). For example, the range of precipitation within Horry County has been up to 10 inches. A CoCoRaHS station in Murrells Inlet recorded 11.53 inches since June 1; meanwhile, another CoCoRaHS station only received 1.83 inches. Summer rainfall is highly variable unlike precipitation in other seasons. Summer thunderstorms can produce heavy rain in isolated areas, while nearby remains little to no rainfall. Recently, above normal temperatures has exasperated the drought, especially for agriculture.

Recent Rainfall: June 1 – July 8, 2026					
Highest Totals			Lowest Totals		
CoCoRaHS and NWS Stations	County	Total Rainfall (inches)	CoCoRaHS and NWS Stations	County	Total Rainfall (inches)
Murrells Inlet 1.9 NNE	Horry	11.53	Lockhart 5.4 N	Cherokee	2.03
Summerville 5.8 NE	Berkeley	8.84	Allendale 1.7 SE	Allendale	1.98
Bluffton 6.3 WNW	Beaufort	8.44	York 5 SSE	York	1.96
Lugoff 2.0 W	Kershaw	8.07	Walterboro 1 SW	Colleton	1.95
Hopkins 3.9 NNE	Richland	7.33	Darlington 7.5 SSW	Darlington	1.90
Summerville 1.9 SSW	Dorchester	7.33	Saint Helena 7.0 E	Beaufort	1.87
Sunset 1.8 NW	Pickens	7.14	Leesburg 10.6 NNE	Lexington	1.87
Murrells Inlet 1.9 NE	Georgetown	6.97	N. Myrtle Beach 1.2 E	Horry	1.83
Summerville 2.3 E	Charleston	6.90	Taylors 2.8 NNW	Greenville	1.43
Lexington 7.1 WSW	Lexington	6.73	Chesnee 4.5 WNW	Spartanburg	1.29

Data is preliminary until final quality control and review are complete.

According to S.C. Department of Agriculture, with the spotty rainfall over the past month, agriculture has maintained at status quo for some crops in some areas. However, dryland crops are desperately behind, as well as irrigated acres across the state. This is putting major strains on depleted surface and groundwater storage. Forages and hay are behind as a whole. We are grateful for recent spotty rainfall, but with recent and upcoming 100-degree temperatures, agriculture is desperately needing more water to get back to normal.

The Committee reviewed condition monitoring reports ([Submit and view Condition Monitoring Observer Reports \(CMOR\)](#)) showing that many livestock producers are dealing with sparse hay yields, some at just 30% of normal, forcing them to dig into their winter feed supplies months ahead of schedule. Other reports clearly showed crops stressed and struggling. Many farm irrigation ponds and wells are being pushed to the limit at record low levels. The long-running

drought presents another challenge to South Carolina's farmers who have been facing many other obstacles.

According to the S.C. Department of Environmental Services, streamflow and groundwater conditions remain below normal to well below normal across the State and support maintaining the current drought status for all counties with the exception of Edgefield County. There are reports of some private wells going dry, with 18 to 20 wells going dry in Hampton County over the past week. As of July 2nd, 15 water systems are implementing mandatory water restrictions, and 40 water systems are requesting voluntary water conservation. All water systems across the State are encouraged to review their Drought Management Plans and Ordinances and implement as needed.

Both the S.C. Department of Natural Resources and the S.C. Department of Environmental Services stress to the public and water suppliers that voluntary water conservation can help mitigate or delay mandatory water restrictions. Acting early can help prevent even tougher restrictions in the weeks ahead if the drought persists or intensifies throughout the hotter months. By reducing non-essential use early in a drought, communities lower overall demand and preserve storage.

Much of South Carolina's Coastal and Pee Dee regions, extending from the North Carolina state line to the Georgia state line, continue to experience worsening drought conditions. Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) values across these areas indicate increasingly dry soils and forest fuels, making wildfires easier to ignite and more difficult to contain.

While scattered showers have provided temporary relief in some locations, rainfall has been inconsistent and has not been sufficient to reverse the overall drying trend. As vegetation continues to cure and organic soils lose moisture, the potential for fast-moving wildfires remains elevated across the Coastal and Pee Dee regions.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission urges residents to use extreme caution with any outdoor burning or activities that could produce sparks. Even small fires can escape quickly under current conditions. Citizens should closely monitor local weather conditions, follow all burning regulations, and report wildfires immediately by calling 911.

The S.C. Drought Response Committee will continue to closely monitor conditions and will reconvene on August 6, 2026.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

260 D Epting Ln, West Columbia, SC 29172

Committee Members	Group	Attendance 07/08/2026
West DMA		
Reg Williams	Agriculture	X
Cheryl Daniels	Commission of Public Works	
Mark Warner	Counties	X
-	Domestic User	VACANT
David Evans	Industry	X
Lynn McEwen	Municipalities	X
Preston Pierce	Power Generation Facilities	
J. Scott Willett	Private Water Supplier	
Chris Rasco	Public Service District	
Rick Green	Regional Council of Gov.	X
Yvonne Kling	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	X
Brian Chemsak	Special Purpose District	X
Central DMA		
John Irwin	Agriculture	X
Ken Tuck	Commission of Public Works	X
Peggy Swearingen	Counties	
Christy Jones	Domestic User	X
Ed Holder	Industry	X
James G. Bagley	Municipalities	X
Alan Stuart	Power Generation Facilities	X
Brad C. Powers	Private Water Supplier	
-	Public Service District	VACANT
Gregory Sprouse	Regional Council of Gov.	
John T. Rivers	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	X
Fred Castles	Special Purpose District	X
Northeast DMA		
Caleb Miller	Agriculture	
-	Commission of Public Works	VACANT
Karolan Ohanesian	Domestic User	
Athena Strickland	Industry	X

Clint Elliott	Municipality	
-	Power Generation Facilities	VACANT
-	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Alan Watkins	Counties	X
Elbert Warren	Public Service District	X
Lindsay Privette	Regional Council of Gov.	X
Joe Ghent	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	X
Nathan Ward	Special Purpose District	X
Southern DMA		
Landrum Weathers	Agriculture	X
Jason Thompson	Commission of Public Works	X
-	Counties	VACANT
-	Domestic User	VACANT
-	Industry	VACANT
Eric Odom	Municipalities	
Casey Moorer	Power Generation Facilities	
-	Private Water Supplier	VACANT
Russell Cornette	Public Service District	X
Ronald E. Mitchum	Regional Council of Gov.	
Marion L. Rizer	Soil and Water Conservation Dist.	X
-	Special Purpose District	VACANT
State Agency Members		
Tyler Bown	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Jordan Van Delden	SC Emergency Management Divis.	X
Joe Koon	SC Dept. of Environ. Services	X
Andy Johnson	SC Forestry Commission	X
Sam Quinney	SC Department of Agriculture	X
Hope Mizzell	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Melissa Griffin	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Jennifer Simmons	SCDNR, LWC Division	X
Amanda DiFalco	SCDNR, LWC Division	X