

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MIAMI FL
1000 AM EDT FRI MAY 30 2008

...RAINY SEASON UNDERWAY ACROSS SOUTHEAST FLORIDA AND FAR SOUTHWESTERN PENINSULA SECTIONS...

BASED ON RAINFALL WHICH BEGAN LAST WEEK, AND THE PRESENCE OF HIGHER MOISTURE VALUES WHICH ARE EXPECTED TO PERSIST FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE, THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN MIAMI HAS DETERMINED THAT THE RAINY SEASON BEGAN OVER SOUTHEAST FLORIDA AND THE FAR SOUTHWESTERN PORTION OF THE FLORIDA PENINSULA ON MAY 22. THIS IS TWO DAYS LATER THAN THE MEDIAN START DATE OF MAY 20.

MOST OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, ESPECIALLY THE AREA FROM NAPLES TO WEST OF LAKE OKEECHOBEE, HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY DRIER THAN EASTERN SECTIONS. THUS, THE RAINY SEASON WILL LIKELY NOT COMMENCE IN THESE AREAS UNTIL THIS WEEKEND AT THE EARLIEST.

THE RAINY SEASON START DATE OF MAY 22 WAS DETERMINED BASED ON THE SURFACE DEW POINT TEMPERATURE REACHING AND EXCEEDING 70 DEGREES FOR THREE DAYS. THE DEW POINT IS A MEASURE OF HUMIDITY, AND THE ONSET OF THE NEAR-DAILY CYCLE OF SHOWERS AND THUNDERSTORMS OVER THE PENINSULA TYPICALLY COINCIDES WITH THE DEW POINTS RISING ABOVE THE 70 DEGREE MARK. THIS YEAR'S ONSET OF THE RAINY SEASON WAS INTERRUPTED BY THE COLD FRONT WHICH SWEEPED THROUGH SOUTH FLORIDA LAST SUNDAY, WHICH BROUGHT TWO TO THREE DAYS OF RELATIVELY DRY CONDITIONS AND LOW DEW POINTS TO THE AREA. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT UNHEARD OF TO HAVE COLD FRONTS MOVE THROUGH SOUTH FLORIDA IN LATE MAY AFTER THE RAINY SEASON HAS BEGUN. IN 1984, 1985 AND 1995, LATE SEASON FRONTS PROVIDED TEMPORARY COOL AND DRY SPELLS FOR SOUTH FLORIDA IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE RAINY SEASON. THESE DRY PERIODS ONLY TEND TO LAST A FEW DAYS, WITH A QUICK RETURN TO MUGGY AND WET CONDITIONS THEREAFTER.

THE BEGINNING OF THE 2008 RAINY SEASON PUTS AN END TO THE 2007-2008 DRY SEASON WHICH BEGAN ON NOVEMBER 2, 2007. DRY SEASON RAINFALL WAS SLIGHTLY BELOW NORMAL ACROSS SOUTHEAST FLORIDA. HERE ARE RAINFALL TOTALS FOR THE THREE PRIMARY REPORTING SITES IN SOUTHEAST FLORIDA:

LOCATION	07-08 DRY SEASON TOTAL	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL
MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	: 16.31 :	: -2.29 :
FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL	: 20.16 :	: -2.99 :
PALM BEACH INTERNATIONAL	: 22.00 :	: -3.37 :

ALTHOUGH THE DRY SEASON OF 2007-2008 ENDED WITH BELOW NORMAL PRECIPITATION, ENOUGH RAIN FELL DURING A STRETCH FROM MID FEBRUARY THROUGH EARLY APRIL TO PREVENT AN EVEN DRIER SEASON. THIS HELPED TO KEEP SOUTHEAST FLORIDA OUT OF DROUGHT CONDITIONS. NEVERTHELESS, LONG TERM RAINFALL TOTALS GOING BACK TO 2006 ARE STILL BELOW NORMAL OVER MANY AREAS, AND A WETTER THAN NORMAL RAINY SEASON WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO ALLEVIATE THE LONG TERM DRYNESS.

RAINY SEASON IN SOUTH FLORIDA ALSO MEANS THAT LIGHTNING WILL BE A PRESENT DANGER. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THUNDERSTORMS OVER THE PENINSULA MEANS THAT WE ARE AT RISK FROM LIGHTNING STRIKES ON AN ALMOST DAILY

BASIS. LIGHTNING IS THE NUMBER ONE WEATHER RELATED KILLER IN FLORIDA, AND RANKS SECOND ONLY TO RIP CURRENTS IN SOUTH FLORIDA. ALL PERSONS IN SOUTH FLORIDA ARE ADVISED TO KEEP AN EYE TO THE SKY AND HEAD INDOORS IF THUNDER IS HEARD.

LIGHTNING CAN ALSO TRIGGER WILDFIRES, ESPECIALLY IN THE EARLY PART OF THE RAINY SEASON WHEN GROUND MOISTURE LEVELS ARE STILL RECOVERING FROM THE PARCHED DRY SEASON CONDITIONS. STAY TUNED TO NOAA WEATHER RADIO AS WELL AS LOCAL TV AND RADIO TO KEEP INFORMED OF THE LATEST WEATHER CONDITIONS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE MIAMI NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WEBSITE AT [WEATHER.GOV/MIAMI](https://www.weather.gov/miami).

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