

WF Observations

Quarterly Newsletter for the South Florida Emergency Management and Spotter Community
Volume VIII, Number 4, December, 2004

Published by the National Weather Service **Weather Forecast Office**, Miami, Florida

After Active Tropical Season – Dry!

Miami Int'l Airport Records 7th driest November

After an incredible tropical season in which the State of Florida endured three direct hits by Category 2 or higher hurricanes (Charley, Frances, and Jeanne), a tropical storm (Bonnie), and a major impact although the eye passed over the coastline in Alabama (Ivan), the water spigot turned off. The month of November was much drier than normal across South Florida, with actual measured rainfall totalling less than an inch at many locations, including Miami International Airport with only 0.34 inch for the entire month. LaBelle, Brighton Indian Reservation, and Marco Island also received less than a third of an inch, while Homestead received almost 3 inches and Hollywood managed about 2 and a quarter inches. Normal rainfall for November across South Florida ranges from around 2 inches in the Naples area to around 5.5 inches in the West Palm Beach area.

Miami's November 2004 rainfall total of 0.34 inch was the seventh driest November of all time. The top seven dry Novembers for Miami include:

1970	0.09	INCH
1917	0.24	
1952	0.25	
1923	0.27	
1944	0.30	
1937	0.33	
1956	0.34	
2004	0.34	...TIED...

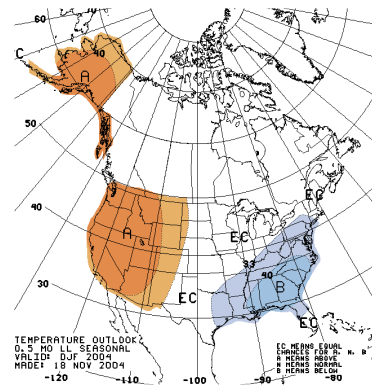
South Florida Outlook

While the southern storm track has already been more active than usual, which is what was expected with a weak El Niño, heavy rainfall has not managed to make much impact across South Florida. Most of the heavy rain has been across New Mexico and Texas east to the Lower Mississippi Valley and into the Carolinas, with amounts greatly decreasing into Central and South Florida.

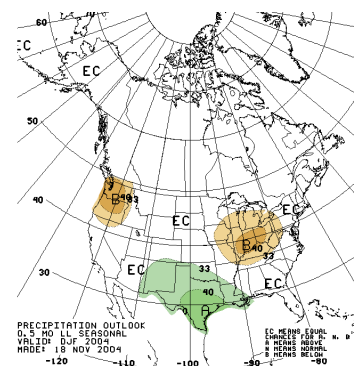
The latest Climate Prediction Center (CPC) outlook for the rest of the winter (second half of December into February) is for equal chances of above or below normal rainfall and temperatures, or, in other words, near normal conditions.

What about the chances for a major freeze in South Florida this winter? WFO Miami Warning Coordination Meteorologist Jim Lushine points out that (1) in the winter season after a major hurricane strike in South Florida, there has never (not yet anyway) been a major freeze, and (2) a weak El Niño climatologically means a less than average chance of a major freeze for South Florida. On the other hand, the longest period of time that has elapsed in South Florida between major freezes has been 16 years. The last major freeze across South Florida was in 1989, which was 15 years ago! Will this be the year that changes statistics?

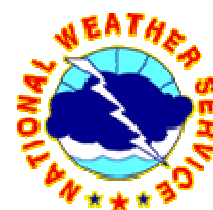
CPC Outlook for winter (DJF)



Near normal temps



Near normal precipitation



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