

Online Interactive Journal Outlines 2015 South Carolina Historic Rain and Flooding

Mizzell, Hope¹, Jennifer Simmons¹, and Tanner Arrington²

¹SC State Climatology Office

²SC Department of Natural Resources

The historic weather events of Oct. 1–5, 2015 produced record rainfall rates and totals in South Carolina. Finding information about that event is now easier due to a new online interactive journal from the SC Department of Natural Resources (DNR) State Climatology Office (SCO). The online interactive journal, www.dnr.sc.gov/flood2015, provides a chronological summary of the rain and flooding, a synoptic description of what caused the unprecedented rainfall, high resolution animated maps, rainfall and hydrologic maps of average return intervals, rankings and records, a photo account, and information on DNR's Law Enforcement Division and Flood Mitigation Program activities during the flooding. The SC SCO hopes the site will help everyone better understand the State's vulnerability to flood so that we can work together to be more aware and resilient.

By the Numbers: Examples of Information Found in the Journal

- Highest 96 –Hour Rainfall: Mount Pleasant 6.4 NE SC (COCORAHS) 27.19 inches.
- 16 COOP Stations set new 24–hour Rainfall Records for the month of October
- Charleston received 11.5” of rain on Oct. 3rd setting a new 24–hour rainfall record for any station in October
- Georgetown Airport received 26.99” setting new October monthly record for any station across the state
- 4 streamflow gages set new all–time record peaks: Gills Creek at Columbia highest in 50 years, Smith Branch at N. Main at Columbia highest in 38 years, Black River at Kingstree highest in 87 years, Edisto River near Givhans highest in 81 years
- 158 SC DNR Law Enforcement Officers were involved in boating, security and evacuation missions. 930 Rescues/Assists were made in the first nine days of the event.

Important Flood Safety Information

- Over half of all flood–related drownings occur when a vehicle is driven into hazardous flood water.
- Second highest percentage of flood–related deaths is due to walking into or near flood waters.
- People underestimate the force and power of water. 6” of fast–moving flood water can knock over an adult. It takes just 2 feet of rushing water to carry away most vehicles. It is NEVER safe to drive or walk into flood waters.
- Homeowners’ insurance does not cover flood damage.
- SC has 199,300 National Flood Insurance Program policies which ranks 6th in the nation. If you live in a Special Flood Hazard Area or high–risk area and have a Federally–backed mortgage, your mortgage lender requires flood insurance.
- Anyone can be vulnerable to flooding. Even if you live in a low–risk area you can purchase flood insurance so long as your community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). People outside of the high–risk flood areas file 20–percent of all NFIP claims.