



Florida Division of Emergency Management State Watch Office

Morning Situation Report

Tuesday, March 17, 2026



State Emergency Operations Center Activation Level

Level 2: Partial Activation



SERT On-Call Personnel

Position	Personnel	Phone	Email
Operations Chief	Amy Godsey	(850) 519-8483	Amy.Godsey@em.myflorida.com
Watch Officer	Caitlyn Gillespie	(850) 688-2119	Caitlyn.Gillespie@em.myflorida.com
Duty Officer	Jeremy Whitt	(850) 755-8521	Jeremy.Whitt@em.myflorida.com
Operations Officer- Day	Ian Danley	(850) 815-4001	SWP@em.myflorida.com
Operations Officer- Swing	Austin Johnson	(850) 815-4001	SWP@em.myflorida.com
Operations Officer- Night	Daniel Leader	(850) 815-4001	SWP@em.myflorida.com
Meteorologist	Caitlyn Gillespie	(850) 688-2119	Caitlyn.Gillespie@em.myflorida.com
Plans Chief	Kaylynn Perry	(850) 254-5657	Plans_Command@em.myflorida.com
Logistics Chief	Christina Goetzman	(850) 519-8581	Christina.Goetzman@em.myflorida.com
Human Services Branch Director	Pam Hughes	(850) 528-5638	Pamela.Hughes@em.myflorida.com
Emergency Services Branch Director	Tim Kenyon	(850) 591-7732	Tim.Kenyon@em.myflorida.com
Infrastructure Branch Director	Paige Lay	(850) 591-9933	Paige.Lay@em.myflorida.com
ESF 8: Health & Medical On-Call	Brandon Gore	(866) 786-4673	DLDOHDutyOfficers@flhealth.gov
ESF 14: Public Information Officer	Stephanie Hartman	(850) 570-3053	Stephanie.Hartman@em.myflorida.com
Finance Chief	Jeremy Smith	(850) 273-1273	Jeremy.Smith@em.myflorida.com



Response Regional Coordination Team



Team	County Location	Visits
Region 1: Jim Roberts	Okaloosa	L-449 Course
Region 2: Enrique Gaston	Leon	Region 2 Sheltering Meeting
Region 3: Glen Hammers	Columbia	Office Admin
Region 4: Tara Kostich	Flagler	HSEEP Course Instruction
Region 5: Austin Beeghly	Polk	L-449 Course Instruction
Region 6: Paul Siddall	Hillsborough	ESF-8 Meeting
Region 7: Kathryn Hollenbeck	Out of Service	Leave (See Coverage)
Region 8: Amber Durden	Indian River, Polk	Office Admin / Shelter Inspection Planning Mtg / Equipment Pickup
Region 9: Brittany Bremer	Lee	SWFL HCC Pediatric Care TF Mtg / Office Admin
Region 10: Claudia Baker	Miami-Dade, Broward	Miami Fire Response / L-449 Course Instruction

Region 7 Coverage Provided by Response Coordinator 6

Status
Normal Operations
Out of Service / Unavailable



Recovery Regional Coordination Team

Team	County Location	Status / Activities
Region 1: Allison Blevins	Okaloosa	L-449 Assistance
Region 2: Justin Lazzara	Out of Region	Leave
Region 3: Kevin Blom	Levy	EM Meeting
Region 4: Joshua Saunders	Out of Region	Leave
Region 5: Elizabeth Caison	Seminole	Administration
Region 6: Rick Rogers	Citrus	Vehicle Maintenance
Region 7: Vacant	N/A	See Coverage
Region 8: Ja-Pheth Butler-Miller	Flagler	Training L-146
Region 9: Vacant	N/A	See Coverage
Region 10: Brian Lee	Miami-Dade	Fire and Rescue Meeting

Region 2 Coverage Provided by Recovery Coordinator 1

Region 4 Coverage Provided by Recovery Coordinator 6

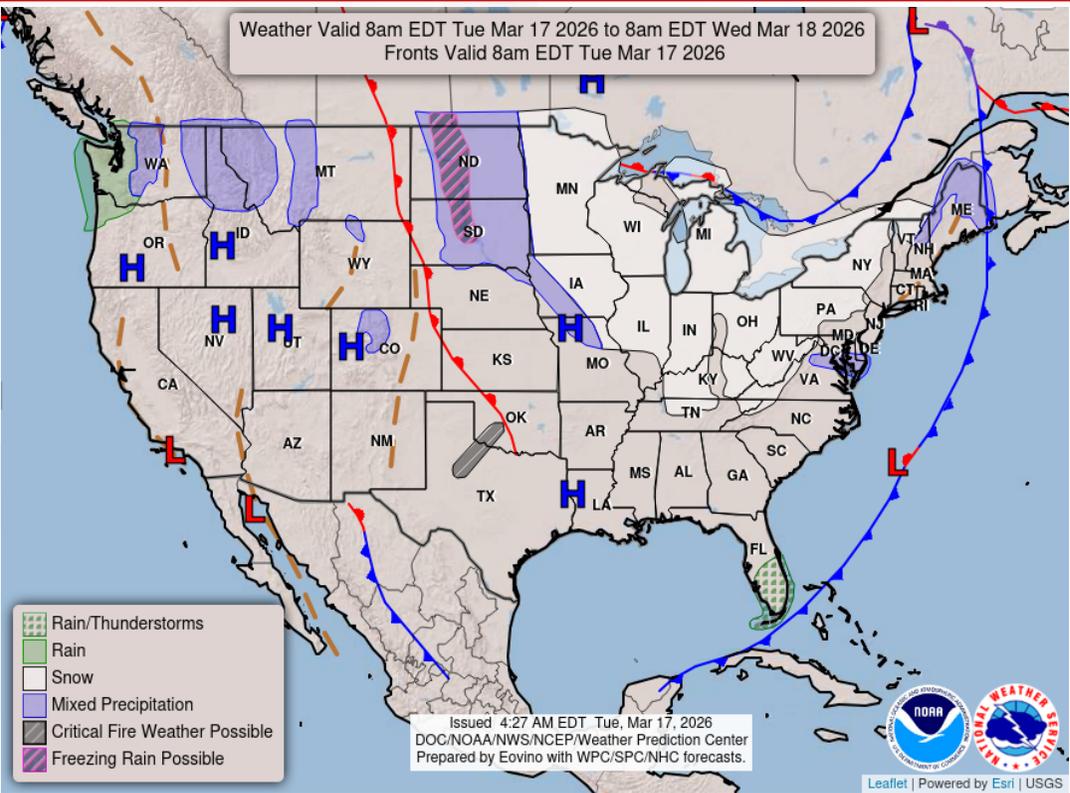
Region 7 Coverage Provided by Recovery Coordinator 6 & 8

Region 9 Coverage Provided by Recovery Coordinator 6 & 8

Status
Normal Operations
In Region / Delayed Response
Deployed / Delayed Response
Out of Service / Unavailable



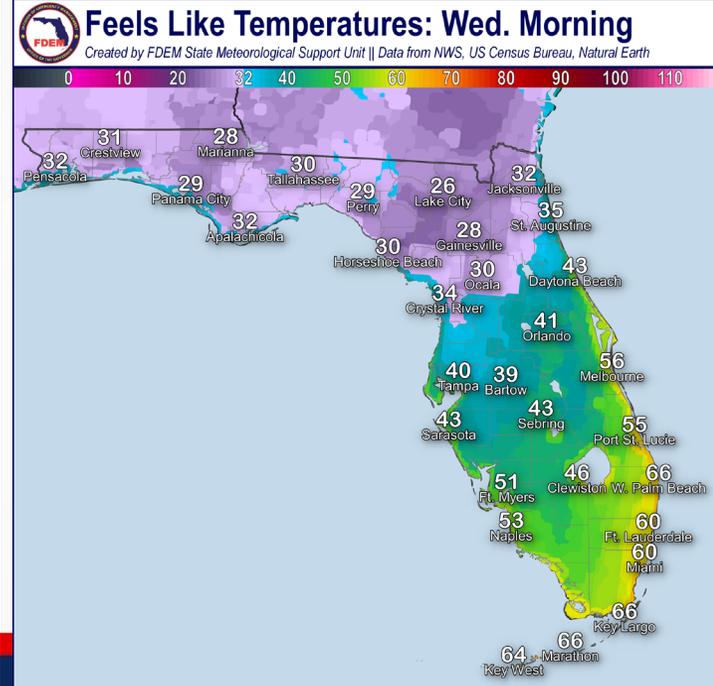
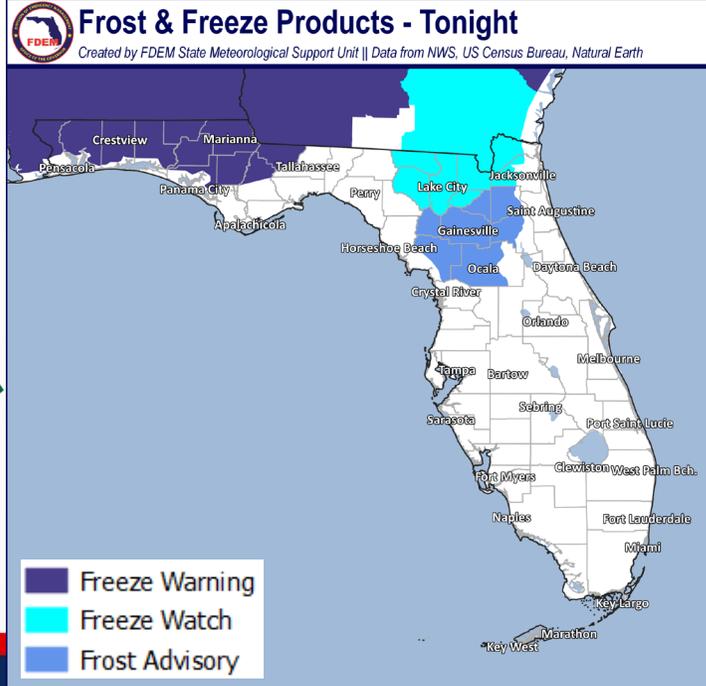
Meteorology Summary



Today's Weather Map



Threat	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10
Lightning										L
Tornado										
Damaging Wind										
Hail										
Flash Flooding										
Freeze (Overnight)	M	M	M	M	L	L				
Fog (Overnight)										
Wildfire	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Rip Currents	M	H	L	H	H	H		H	H	H
Lake Okeechobee Elevation	12.16 ft. (2.30 ft. <u>Below</u> Normal)									
Keetch-Byram Drought Index	464 (-40) on a scale from 0 (very moist) to 800 (very dry)									



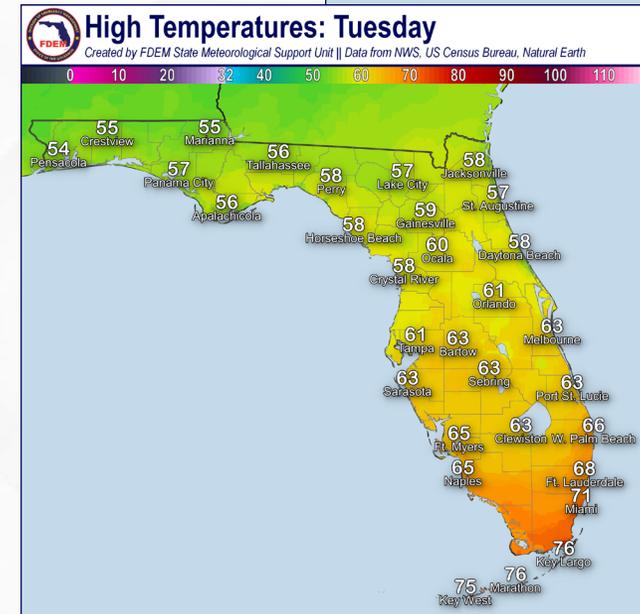
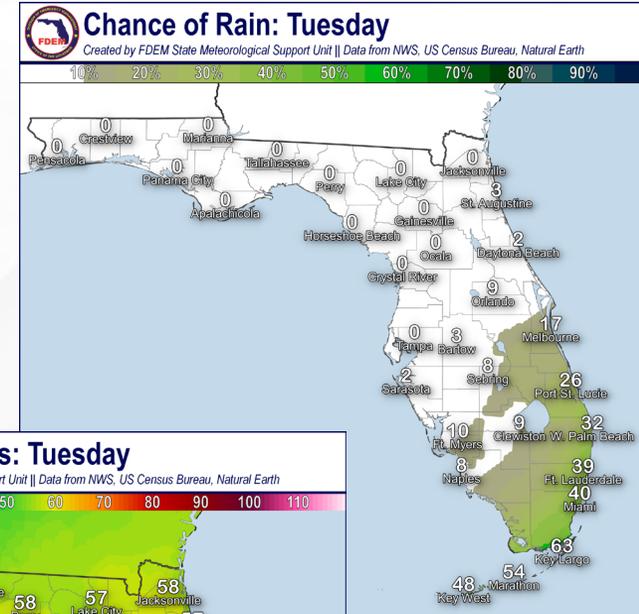


Meteorology Summary

Statewide Overview, Next 24 Hours:

The colder airmass has certainly settled in behind yesterday's strong frontal system, with chilly temperatures in the **lower to middle 30s** observed across much of North Florida this morning. That marks an impressive 30- to 40-degree temperature swing over the past 24 hours! Temperatures are starting to warm up under the mixture of sunshine and clouds; however, afternoon temperatures peak in the 50s and 60s across North and Central Florida. Breezy northerly to northwesterly winds of 5-15 mph will continue to reinforce the cooler and drier weather, with **wind gusts** of **15-25 mph** possible throughout the Florida Peninsula. As our recent frontal system stalls over the Florida Straits, its proximity will still allow for isolated to scattered shower activity across South Florida (40-60% chance of rain). While a stray thunderstorm cannot be ruled out, severe weather or flooding are not expected. Afternoon high temperatures remain in the upper 60s to middle 70s across South Florida and the Florida Keys.

Another cold night expected across North and interior Central Florida, with temperatures plummeting **at or below freezing**. **Freeze Warnings** have been reissued for the interior Florida Panhandle and **Freeze Watches** are in place across Northeast Florida and the Suwannee River Valley; *upgrades to Freeze Warnings will be issued as conditions warrant this afternoon*. Even as winds gradually subside through the evening and overnight hours, **feels-like temperatures** in the **middle to upper 20s** can be expected throughout North Florida; **sub-freezing wind chills** are also possible from the Nature Coast into interior North-Central Florida. Conditions will be favorable for **widespread frost** to develop across North Florida; **Frost Advisories** will go into effect along the northern I-75 corridor tonight. This is especially important for agricultural interests as many plants and crops have already begun to bud, bloom, and green up after the warm 2-week stretch of late February/early March.





Coastal Hazards & Hydrology

Rip Currents: A **moderate to high risk of rip currents** can be expected along all Florida beaches today, with low risk conditions gradually returning to Northwest Florida beaches through the day. For the latest Rip Current Outlook, visit www.weather.gov/beach.

Marine Hazards: Breezy post-frontal winds will continue to yield dangerous beach and marine conditions along Florida coastlines today. **Wave heights of 3-5'** can be expected along Florida Peninsula beaches, spanning both the Gulf and Atlantic coastlines. **Isolated breakers** in the surf zone may reach **6-8'** along portions of the Treasure Coast and Palm Beach County beaches. Sea state returns to 1-2' along the Florida Panhandle.

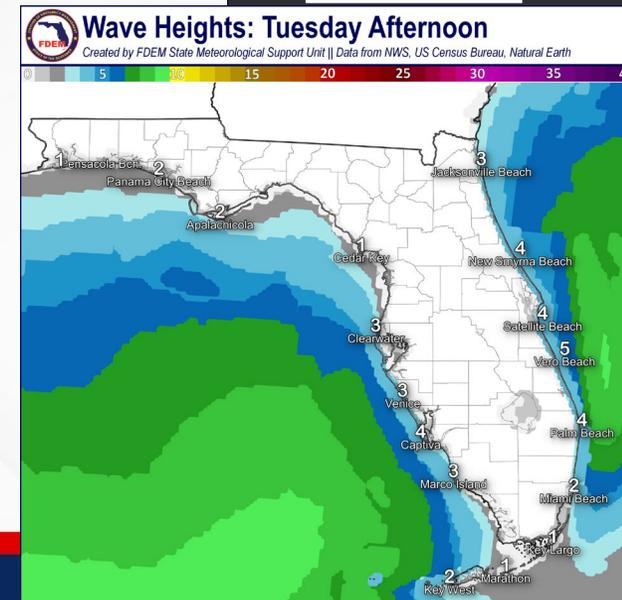
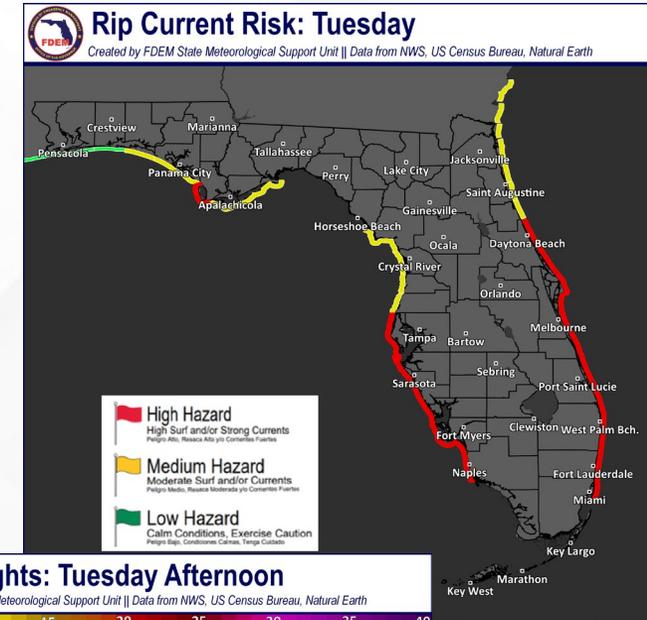
Red Tide was observed at background conditions in Escambia, Walton, Bay, Gulf, and Franklin Counties, and in very low concentrations from one sample collected in Brevard County (valid 3/13/26).

Coastal Flooding: There is no risk for coastal flooding today.

Flash Flooding: Flash flooding is not expected across Florida today.

Riverine Flooding: There are no riverine concerns across Florida. For more information, visit the [River Forecast Center](#).

Lake Okeechobee's average elevation is 12.16 feet, which is within the operational band and is 2.30 feet below normal for this time of year (valid: 3/15/2026).



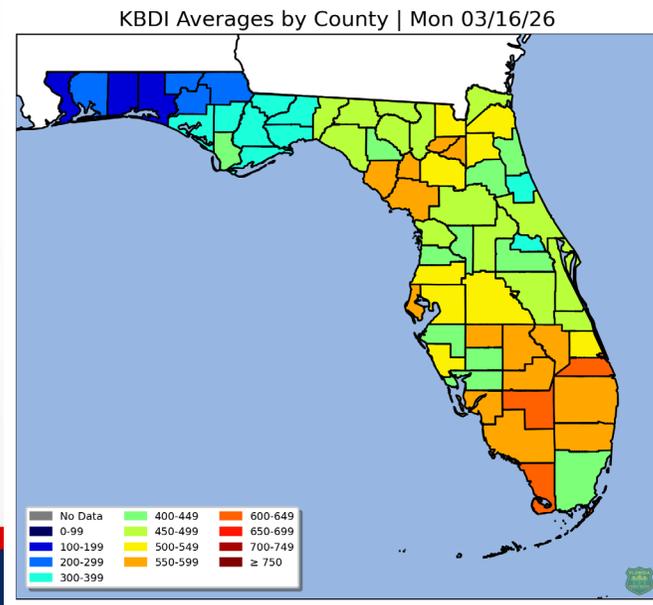
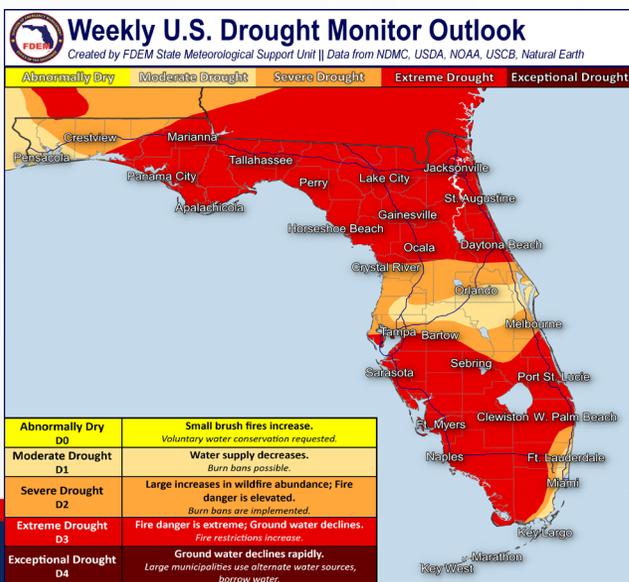


Drought & Fire Weather

Fire Weather: Yesterday's wetting rains were certainly beneficial in the short-term; however, we will need several more rounds of rainfall to push the needle out of the deficit and improve the long-term drought and dry soil/vegetation. Relative humidity values quickly dry today and approach **critical thresholds** across North and interior Florida (**20-30%**), with breezy northerly to northwesterly winds lingering throughout the Sunshine State; given recent rainfall the overall wildfire threat will be held at **locally sensitive to elevated** levels today. According to the [Florida Forest Service](#), there are 54 active wildfires across the state burning approximately 4,876 acres.

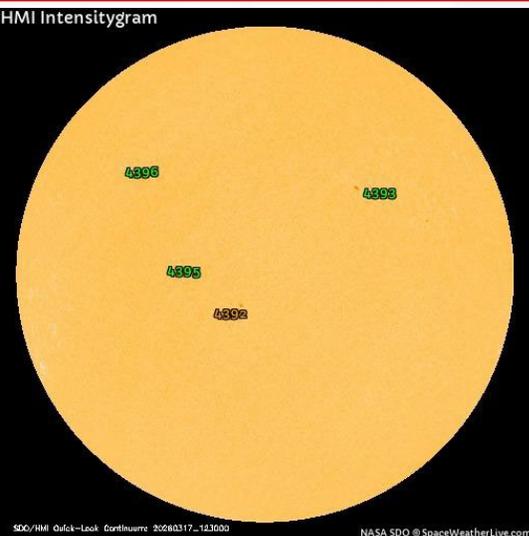
Drought (3/12/26): Very little changes were made to this weeks Drought Monitor update as much of the state struggled to see any meaningful rainfall enough to put a dent in the ongoing drought. The heaviest rains over the past week fell across portions of West-Central Florida with pockets of 2-4" of rainfall. A few localized pockets of heavier totals fell across Northeast Florida as well, though general amounts below 1" were found statewide. An **extreme drought (level 3 of 4)** remains in place across much of North Florida and South Florida. In fact, some expansion of the extreme drought was seen across interior Palm Beach and Broward counties closer to the coastline. Throughout Central Florida, and small pocket of **moderate drought (level 1 of 4)** remains, though it shrunk with **severe drought (level 2 of 4)** expanding to include all of southern Sumter, Lake and Seminole counties. A **moderate drought** also remains in place for the very far western Panhandle. As of this outlook, 90% of the state is under a **severe drought (level 2 of 4)** or worse and 72% of the state under an **extreme drought (level 3 of 4)**. Rainfall departures remain well below normal across much of the state as recent warm and dry conditions have led to further drying of vegetation and grounds. Streamflows continue to drop to extremely low levels in some waterways across North and Central Florida, and some have completely dried up. Looking ahead, scattered showers and embedded thunderstorms will be a theme each afternoon across much of the Peninsula, especially South Florida, through the weekend (3/13-3/15) as warm temperatures and the sea breeze boundaries promote afternoon development. Some of this rainfall could lead to localized amounts enough to put a good dent in the local drought (4-6" amounts through the weekend). However, a widespread drenching rainfall is not currently anticipated. Trends in the weekend rainfall will continue to be monitored to see if it will be enough for meaningful drought alleviation.

The **Keetch-Byram Drought Index** average for Florida is **464 (-40)** on a scale from 0 (very wet) to 800 (very dry). There are **26** Florida counties that have an average KBDI above 500 (drought/increased fire danger).

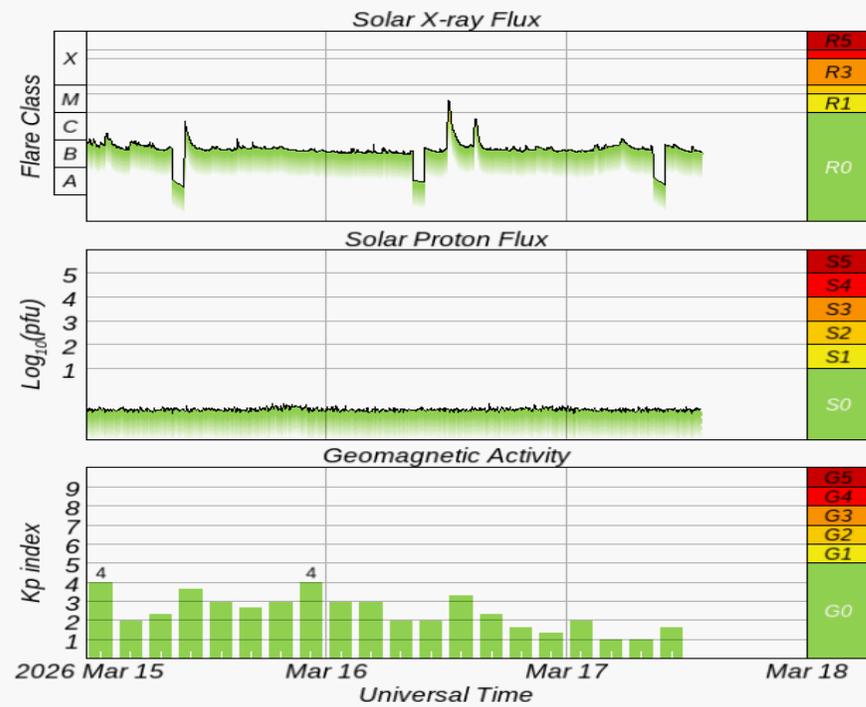




Space Weather

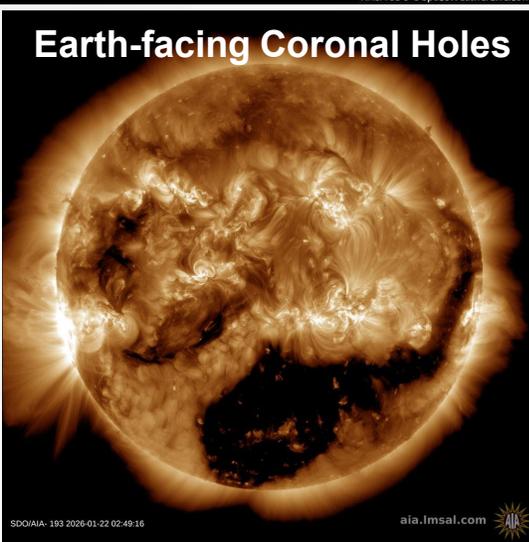


Current Sunspots



Solar Flare Risk	Active Watches & Warnings	Past 24 hours
M-class: 25%	Geomagnetic Storm: None	M2 Solar Flare
X-class: 5%	Radiation Storm: None	R1 Radio Blackout

48-Hour Geomagnetic Forecast	
3/17	3/18
Max Kp= 3 (G0)	Max Kp= 3 (G0)
Chance of minor activity = 5% severe activity = 1%	Chance of minor activity = 5% severe activity = 1%



Space Weather: Solar activity is expected to remain at low levels, with a chance for a strong (M-class) solar flare mainly from sunspot region #4932. Should an M-class flare develop it will be capable of producing minor to moderate (R1-R2) radio blackouts. Enhanced solar wind parameters linger once again today, but will trend on their gradual decline. Organized geomagnetic storming is not anticipated, and the overall space weather threat to Florida remains very low.



SWO Communications Systems & Contact Information

Equipment	Contact	Status	Comments
Phone:	800-320-0519, 850-815-4001, 850-591-0071 (Backup Cell)	Operational	
Backup Landline:	850-487-3234, 850-487-3228	Operational	
Fax:	850-815-4979	Operational	
Email:	SWP@em.myflorida.com	Operational	
SWO Tracker:	https://apps.floridadisaster.org/SWO/	Operational	
SLERS:	DEM Statewide	Operational	
FNARS:	WGY974	Operational	
Federal NAWAS:	State Watch Office	Operational	
EMnet Message:	FL.000- State Watch Office	Operational	
EMnet Voice:	FL SWP- State Watch Office	Operational	
IPAWS:	LP.1 Stations via Emnet	Operational	
FIN:	SOFEOC	Operational	
Satellite Phones:	MSAT 888-890-5178 or Iridium 480-263-8838	Operational	
Website:	http://www.floridadisaster.org	Operational	

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