

SOUTH CAROLINA DROUGHT TABLETOP EXERCISE

SC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
WEST COLUMBIA, SC
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Current Policies and Practice

South Carolina has experienced several droughts over the past two decades, highlighting the need for multiple agencies and organizations to work together to effectively manage water resources during these events. Formal plans and processes are important tools for water managers and users as they monitor, conserve, and manage water resources during drought events.

- The **South Carolina Drought Response Act and Regulations** establish the procedures through which the State monitors and responds at the incipient, moderate, severe, and extreme drought alert phases.
- The **South Carolina Drought Response Plan**, located in Appendix 10 of the State's Emergency Operations Plan, describes actions that occur when water shortages are imminent and conditions reach a severity level beyond the scope of local communities.

The 2019 Tabletop Exercise

92 participants, representing the **South Carolina Drought Response Committee** and 48 different organizations, walked through a series of scenarios and reviewed the plans that govern the State's drought response.

OBJECTIVES

1. Exercise the SC drought monitoring and response process
2. Identify gaps in existing processes and prioritize follow up actions
3. Increase awareness of participants' roles and responsibilities for drought response and planning

Participants reviewed the agricultural, fire, and water resource impacts that occur at each drought stage, discussed the effectiveness of South Carolina's response and preparedness, and identified areas for improvement. Breakout groups, organized by South Carolina's **Drought Management Areas**, facilitated more focused discussions and networking.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- *The breakout sessions were very helpful and allowed representatives from all backgrounds to talk and interact.*



- *This being my first year on the [Drought Response] Committee and my first year attending the exercise, the best thing I learned was the basic structure of the different organizations and put faces with names which is still important even in the digital world we live.*
- *One of the most interesting takeaways was the difference in timing of drought impacts for agriculture vs. drinking water and industry.*
- *The resources and points of contact available were invaluable. Will note these in our plan. Documented several improvements to incorporate into our plan - revise triggers and communication templates to customers.*

