

State of Louisiana



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION NUMBER 148 JBE 2023

STATE OF EMERGENCY – HEAT-RELATED EMERGENCY SUSPENSION

- WHEREAS,** the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, La. R.S. 29:721, *et seq.*, confers upon the Governor of the State of Louisiana emergency powers to deal with emergencies and disasters, including those caused by fire, flood, earthquake or other natural or manmade causes, in order to ensure that preparations of this State will be adequate to deal with such emergencies or disasters and to preserve the lives and property of the people of the State of Louisiana;
- WHEREAS,** when the Governor determines that a disaster or emergency has occurred, or the threat thereof is imminent, La. R.S. 29:724(B)(1) empowers him to declare a state of emergency by executive order or proclamation, or both;
- WHEREAS,** the National Weather Service has issued a record number of excessive heat warnings, with heat indices in the 100s, since June 27, 2023;
- WHEREAS,** in addition to the extreme heat, minimal rainfall has led to drought conditions throughout most of the state, stressing the abilities of water districts and increasing the threat of wildfires;
- WHEREAS,** the Louisiana State Fire Marshal and the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry issued a statewide burn ban on August 7, 2023, due to the extremely dry conditions;
- WHEREAS,** the Office of Public Health has advised that several water systems have experienced water outages and boil advisories due to the drought conditions and increased water demand;
- WHEREAS,** on August 11, 2023, in Proclamation Number 141 JBE 2023, the Governor declared that a statewide emergency existed in the State of Louisiana because of the heat-related emergencies;
- WHEREAS,** due to these heat-related emergencies, there have been more than 440 wildfires statewide since August 1, 2023, burning thousands of acres across the state;
- WHEREAS,** these wildfires continue to burn throughout the state because of the extreme heat and drought conditions the state is currently experiencing;
- WHEREAS,** prescribed burning, intended to be used as a land management tool, continues across the state despite the current burn ban issued by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry and the State Fire Marshal, compounding the existing threat of wildfires due to the severe heat and drought in the state;
- WHEREAS,** La. R.S. 29:724 authorizes the governor during a declared state of emergency to suspend the provisions of any state regulatory statute prescribing procedures for conducting state business, or the orders, rules or regulations of any state agency, if strict compliance with the provision of any statute, order, rule, or regulation would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency; and
- WHEREAS,** this order is necessary in order to protect the life, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Louisiana.

NOW THEREFORE, I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

- SECTION 1:** The state of emergency declared in Proclamation Number 141 JBE 2023 continues to exist in the State of Louisiana as a result of the imminent threat of emergency conditions that threaten the lives and property of the citizens of the State.
- SECTION 2:** Pursuant to La. R.S. 29:724(D)(1), La. R.S. 3:17, authorizing the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry to permit prescribed burning under certain environmental conditions, is hereby suspended to further reduce the increasing threat of wildfires. Additionally, all written authorizations for prescribed burning issued by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry pursuant to La. R.S. 3:17 are suspended.
- SECTION 3:** All departments, commissions, boards, agencies and officers of the State, or any political subdivision thereof, are authorized and directed to cooperate in actions the State may take in response to this event.
- SECTION 4:** This order is effective upon signature and shall remain in effect from Friday, August 25, 2023, to Saturday, September 23, 2023, unless terminated sooner.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 25th day of August, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bel Edwards', is written over a horizontal line.

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

**ATTEST BY THE SECRETARY
OF STATE**

SECRETARY OF STATE