



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UPDATE: STATEWIDE BURN BAN REMAINS IN EFFECT DUE TO CONTINUING, CONCERNING DRY CONDITIONS

BATON ROUGE- Following consultation among the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFM), Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) and the National Weather Service (NWS), the statewide burn ban re-issued on August 25th removing all exceptions remains in effect.

Multiple factors were taken into consideration when making this decision to include Thursday's anticipated update to the Drought Index Map showing almost all of the state remaining in the highest categories for fire risk, and in fact, more parishes being added to the worst category, D4 (Exceptional Drought). In addition, according to the state's weather experts, though some areas have received rain in the past few days, the rain has not significantly improved conditions and it has not been consistent even within individual parishes. Lastly, the forecast for the rest of this week into next still keeps the state under very high temperatures alongside a consistent drop in humidity which increases the chances for renewed Red Flag Warnings across most of our state.

"Wildfires are still burning across our state. Hundreds of firefighters are still working hard to extinguish those fires and there's a grave concern more can develop," said State Fire Marshal Chief Dan Wallis, "This decision was not made lightly, but it is being made with public safety, including the safety of our first responders, as the top priority."

"Even though we have received a limited amount of rain, drought conditions still exist that could result in a massive wildfire," said Commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Dr. Mike Strain, "We are asking for your help. Please continue to follow the guidelines of the burn ban that remains in place at this time. Let's continue to pray for much-needed rain that will allow us all to get back to normal."

As a reminder, the active burn ban order in effect as of August 25, 2023, at 12 p.m., prohibits **ALL** private burning, with no limitations, pursuant to authority under R.S. 40:1602. This burn ban order coincides with a separate burn ban order issued by LDAF prohibiting all agricultural burning including but not limited to prescribed burning.

However, Louisiana residents **can** resume outdoor cooking with safety measures in place. These measures include using contained cooking equipment like grills and smokers, designed for cooking purposes only, on a flame-resistant surface with a water source or fire extinguisher nearby. The fuel source for this equipment (propane, charcoal, pellets, etc.) is not a factor in its acceptable use. The use of open flames in fire pits, campfires, barrels, bonfires, burn piles, and like open burning is still prohibited.

The status of this burn ban order will be reconsidered on a weekly basis.