



JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS  
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



DANIEL H. WALLIS  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

LICENSING MEMORANDUM FW-1-2023

DATE: August 24, 2023

FROM: Erin St. Pierre  
Deputy Chief, Special Services

APPROVED: Dan H. Wallis  
Louisiana State Fire Marshal

TO: All Pyrotechnic Operators

RE: Public Fireworks Displays & Current Weather-related Emergency

On August 14, 2023, Governor John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency in which he acknowledged that the intense heat, coupled with worsening drought conditions and significant drops in levels of state waterways, has resulted in a direct threat to water supplies, agriculture and other plants, as flame, sparks and ember sources introduced to dry vegetation can have catastrophic effects. This concern has also been shared by the National Weather Service in the form of "red flag warnings," which are issued when a combination of very low humidity, warm temperatures and potential strong winds are expected, which can cause fires to spread rapidly. Currently, most of Louisiana is under a red flag warning.

In response to the extreme heat that Louisiana has endured for weeks, a number of state agencies, including the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM), have enacted measures intended to mitigate the effects of increasingly dangerous high temperatures.

To demonstrate the effect that weather-related conditions have had on the state, please note the following statistics from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness:

- Between January 1, 2023 and June 30, 2023 (6 months), a total of 278 wildfires were reported, an average of 1.5 fires per day.
- From July 1-31, 2023 (30 days), a total of 121 fires were reported, an average of 4.1 fires per day. (173% **increase** over the previous 6 months)
- Between August 1-10, 2023 (10 days), firefighters responded to 121 fires, an average of 12.1 fires per day. (195% **increase** over the previous 30 days)
- From August 11-21, 2023 (10 days), 236 wildfires raged, averaging an astounding 23.6 fires per day! (95% **increase** over the previous 10 days)

These fires have caused millions of dollars in property damage, burning well over 10,000 acres. In addition, dozens of fire departments are struggling with depleting resources, to such an extent that firefighters are being brought in from surrounding states to assist.

In response to the governor's declaration and the sobering destruction these fires are causing, the OSFM is forced to address dozens of public fireworks displays scheduled in the coming weeks and the potential threats they may pose to the citizens and properties in the state.

Effective immediately, on each Monday until this weather-related emergency ceases, the OSFM will evaluate the status of the relative threats scheduled displays may pose as to determine whether any issued permits must be rescinded or denied. **Please note that until favorable weather provides relief in the form of cooler temperatures and/or adequate precipitation, all applications for public displays will be denied and any permits issued prior to these reviews will be rescinded.**

Please note that in the event that an application is denied or a permit rescinded, any monies received by the OSFM for permits will be refunded accordingly.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.