



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Man Dies In Alexandria Brush Fire

RAPIDES PARISH- State Fire Marshal (SFM) deputies continue investigating a brush fire in the Alexandria area that claimed the life of a male property owner.

Around 1:30 p.m., on Monday, October 23, Rapides Parish Fire District #2 responded to a call for a brush fire located in the 6100 block of La 488 which is also known as Twin Bridges Road. As firefighters were working to extinguish the large field and forest fire, they located the body of a man in the burning field behind the home on the property. At this time, the victim is believed to be the 66-year-old home and property owner.

Following an assessment of the scene and conducting witness statements, deputies have determined the fire began as a burn pile of hay near a trash pile in the field behind the home. At the time of the fire, Rapides Parish remained under the statewide burn ban due to extended, dangerously dry conditions coupled with low humidity and wind levels conducive for quickly spreading a small fire. Deputies are still investigating how the man fell victim to the fire.

“This is another incredibly sad situation that should resonate with every person in our state,” said State Fire Marshal Chief Dan Wallis, “The current fire danger is not an exaggeration. While some parishes have opted out of the statewide burn ban due to conditions changing, several have reentered the burn ban again because conditions have worsened. So regardless of whether your parish is still in the burn ban or not, doing any activity involving fire right now can lead to tragedy for you, your loved ones, your neighbors and your community.”

The statewide burn ban has been in effect since August 7 but was last updated on Friday, September 29 to renew the ability for parish leadership to opt out of the burn ban and for fire chiefs to grant case-by-case permissions for residents that request exceptions.

Where the burn ban remains in place:

- The use of open flames in fire pits, campfires, barrels, bonfires, burn piles and like-open burning is included in the burn ban.

- It is recommended to conduct all outdoor cooking with safety measures in place including 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.
- Mowing and yard work is not banned, however, it is preferred to avoid mowing and/or driving/operating hot machinery and/or any activity that could produce a spark on or near dry, brown, dead grass because of its flammability.

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