



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 30, 2015

Texas Guard to Monitor Federal “Jade Helm” Military Exercise

Responding to widespread public concerns over a giant U.S. Special Forces exercise dubbed [“Jade Helm 15,” which identifies Texas, Utah, and part of California as “hostile,”](#) popular Lone Star State Governor Greg Abbott [ordered the Texas State Guard to monitor the federal military drills](#). The Obama White House tried to downplay growing suspicions about the two-month drill following Gov. Abbott’s order, and various leftist journalists attacked the governor for responding to the concerns of his constituents. Still, while the Texas governor received broad public support for his response in Texas, more than a few citizens and analysts remain unsettled by the mysterious Jade Helm program.



The massive and controversial U.S. military operations, set to take place across the American Southwest this summer, have stirred nationwide fears about the Obama administration’s agenda — especially after a [leaked document on Jade Helm](#) showed American states in the region shaded in different colors based on their hypothetical loyalty to Washington. The most conservative states — Texas and Utah — were shaded red for “hostile,” while more liberal states such as Colorado and Nevada were colored blue for being “permissive.” Federal authorities insist the drill is to prepare for “overseas” operations.

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Citizens across Texas and the rest of the United States, though, were unconvinced by the official explanation. “It’s the same thing that happened in Nazi Germany: You get the people used to the troops on the street, the appearance of uniformed troops and the militarization of the police,” Bastrop resident Bob Wells was quoted as saying after a public meeting about the plans for training in the Texas community. “They’re gathering intelligence. That’s what they’re doing. And they’re moving logistics in place for martial law. That’s my feeling.”

So, to help ease the growing concerns, vociferously expressed by outraged citizens in public meetings across Texas and online across America, Governor Abbott, a Republican and strong supporter of the U.S. military, decided to take action. In a letter sent to Major General Gerald “Jake” Betty, the commander of Texas military forces, the governor made clear that the rights and safety of Texas citizens were his top priority.

“To address concerns of Texas citizens and ensure that Texas communities remain safe, secure and informed about military procedures occurring in their vicinity, I am directing the Texas State Guard to monitor Operation Jade Helm 15,” Abbott wrote in his letter to the Guard’s commander. “During the



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Operation's eight-week training period from July 2015 to September 2015, I expect to receive regular updates on the progress and safety of the Operation."

During the training operation, Abbot continued, "it is important that Texans know their safety, constitutional rights, private property rights and civil liberties will not be infringed."

By having the Texas State Guard keep an eye on the U.S. Special Forces training on a continual basis, the state's military forces will also facilitate communication between Gov. Abbott's office and Jade Helm 15 commanders "to ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect Texans," the letter noted. Abbott also said that U.S. Special Operations Command had assured Texas that training exercises would "pose no risk to residents or property." Jade Helm's commanders have pledged to "coordinate" with local residents through verbal and written communications, the governor noted as well.

Still, having the state Guard monitor the controversial operation will allow Texas to "be informed of the details of military personnel movements and training schedules." The monitoring will also allow the governor's office to quickly and effectively communicate with local communities, law enforcement, public safety officials, and citizens.

Of course, the reference to knowing where U.S. military personnel involved in the drill are going to be may not please those behind Jade Helm. In statements outlining the plan, officials noted that one element of the exercise would involve Special Forces personnel trying to "blend in with the local environment and not stand out and blow their cover." The U.S. troops are also "going to set up cells of people and test how well they're able to move around without getting too noticed in the community," Chief Deputy Roy Boyd with the Victoria County Sheriff's Office was quoted as saying in press reports about the drill.

According to an unclassified document about Jade Helm, "some individuals may conduct suspicious activities designed to prepare them for complex environments overseas." Some participants will also be wearing civilian attire and driving civilian vehicles, the presentation said. Among those participating in the drill will be the elite of the U.S. military: Army Special Forces Command, (Green Berets); Navy SEALs; Air Force Special Operations Command; Marine Special Operations Command; Marine Expeditionary Units; and the 82nd Airborne Division. In all, 1,200 Special Forces personnel from all branches will participate.

In the same letter to the commander of Texas forces, Abbott also made clear that he is a strong supporter of U.S. troops. "The action I take today comes with the recognition of Texas' long history of supporting our military forces and our proud tradition of training, deploying and supporting our active-duty troops and returning veterans," he said. "As Governor, I have the utmost respect for the deep patriotism of the brave military men and women who put their lives on the line to fight for and defend our freedom. I remain certain that our military members will keep America the freest and strongest nation the world has ever known."

Suspicious about the true purpose of Jade Helm 15 have been spreading like wildfire in recent weeks. More than a few analysts have suggested it could be everything from [martial-law training](#) and a plot for [rounding up dissidents, to an intelligence-gathering operation](#) to find out which state or local officials might resist potential future federal tyranny. As the concerns grew, officials began attempting to dismiss them, describing the program as mere training for foreign combat operations and "unconventional warfare."

The Obama White House sounded confused about Gov. Abbott's order to the State Guard. "I have no



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idea what he's thinking," Obama spokesman Josh Earnest told reporters. "The thing that I can say without having a lot of detailed knowledge about the particular exercise is that in no way will the constitutional rights or civil liberties of any American citizen be infringed upon while this exercise is being conducted."

Various far-left activists posing as journalists in Texas and beyond, meanwhile, attacked the popular governor for responding to the concerns of the people who elected him. Some especially unhinged Big Government advocates such as Heather Digby Parton with the website Salon, who mistakenly identified the Texas Guard as the "national guard," even claimed that public suspicions about the exercise and the Obama administration's agenda represented "hate" against U.S. troops.

Gov. Abbott has received widespread applause from Texans, conservatives, Tea Party activists, and others for responding to concerns of constituents about Jade Helm and working to ensure public safety amid the exercise. Just a few years ago, Abbott, then serving as Texas attorney general, also drew national support after [standing up to the Obama administration's radical plan to station United Nations-linked "international election observers"](#) at Texas polling places to monitor the election.

At this point, the true purpose of the gargantuan Special Forces drill remains unclear. It may be just what federal officials say it is — practice for overseas combat. Or it may not be. Considering [recent developments](#), [Obama's history](#), the [White House's track record on honesty](#), and the information that is [publicly known about Jade Helm](#), though, it would be beyond naïve to simply take the Obama administration at its word on this issue or anything else.

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