

**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
BUREAU OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT**

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**STATEWIDE, WITHIN BEACHES OR BEACH/DUNE SYSTEM CRITICAL AREAS**

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**EMERGENCY ORDER  
PLACEMENT OF SANDBAGS  
24-EO-TSD1**

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The South Carolina Department of Environmental Services, Bureau of Coastal Management (SCDES BCM or the Department), an agency of the State of South Carolina, organized and existing under the authority of the South Carolina Coastal Zone Management Act, S.C. Code Ann. §48-39-10 *et seq.*, finds that emergency conditions may occur associated with Tropical Storm Debby beginning on August 5, 2024, statewide within beaches or beach/dune system critical areas in the State of South Carolina and therefore located within the “critical area” jurisdiction of the Department. These conditions may expose and create an imminent threat to the existing habitable structures or critical infrastructure on beachfront properties.

The Department finds that this imminent threat constitutes temporary emergency conditions that may endanger the health, safety, welfare, and resources of residents of the coastal zone as well as the general population of the State of South Carolina. Accordingly, the Department, pursuant to the authority of S.C. Code Ann. §48-39-130(D)(1), hereby issues an Emergency Order to allow the owners of beachfront properties or government authorities statewide, whose lands and buildings abut the Atlantic Ocean, to place sandbags immediately adjacent to an erosional escarpment, habitable structure, or critical infrastructure if the habitable structure or critical infrastructure is in imminent danger. A structure is determined to be in imminent danger when the erosion comes within 20 feet of the structure or if the Department determines that extenuating circumstances related to site conditions exist. The local government with jurisdiction over the site must be notified of the activity.

This Emergency Order, 24-EO-TSD1, will expire on September 4, 2024 (30 days from the date of this Order). At that time, the sandbags shall be removed at the property owner's expense. An extension of this order may be granted by the Department only if the requirements of S.C. Code Ann. § 48-39-130(D)(1) and S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 30-

15.H(2) are met and the required documentation is submitted to the Department prior to the expiration date of this order.

Specifically, all work must conform to the following requirements:

1. The use of sandbags will require a bond to be submitted to the Department to reasonably estimate and cover the cost of eventual sandbag removal, subject to S.C. Code Ann. §48-39-130(D)(1)(a). The bond must be structured so that the Department may direct funds for the removal of sandbags in the event the property owner abandons the sandbags or does not remove the sandbags at the expiration of this Emergency Order. Bond information must be submitted in the form of an email to Matt Slagel, Manager of BCM's Beachfront Management Section, at [Matt.Slagel@des.sc.gov](mailto:Matt.Slagel@des.sc.gov).
2. The Department must be notified in writing of all activities performed under this Emergency Order within 72 hours. This notification should include the property owner's name, the property address, the date sandbags were placed adjacent to the property, and the size and number of sandbags placed. This information must be submitted in the form of an email to Matt Slagel, Manager of BCM's Beachfront Management Section, at [Matt.Slagel@des.sc.gov](mailto:Matt.Slagel@des.sc.gov).
3. The bags shall be commercially manufactured for the purpose of holding sand.
4. The bags, when filled, shall be a maximum size of one cubic yard.
5. Sandbag fill material must be from an upland source and compatible in grain size and color with the native beach sand and should contain no more than a minimal amount of organic material. Only clean sand may be placed in the bags.

6. Sandbags may be placed no farther seaward than is necessary to protect the existing habitable structure, critical infrastructure, or golf course. In no case may sandbags be used to protect a dune.
7. All sandbags are to be placed parallel to the shoreline. Excavation shall not be allowed below existing beach grade. The toe of the sandbags shall not be buried during installation. At no time shall the sandbags be buried or covered with sand from non-natural processes, including sand scraping or renourishment.
8. Sandbags cannot cover or bury any portion of an erosion control structure.
9. Sandbags shall generally be limited to a maximum height of six feet above the beach. The sandbags shall be stacked at an angle no steeper than 45 degrees.
10. The property owner is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the sandbags to ensure that they remain in the location authorized by the Emergency Order, above grade and in good repair. Any sandbags which are in disrepair and/or not serving their intended purpose must be removed from the beaches critical area. Failure to maintain the sandbags may result in the Department requiring the removal of the sandbags at the property owner's expense.
11. All sandbags placed on the beach shall be counted and recorded. Documentation of such must be maintained and provided to the Department in writing within two days of placement. Weekly reports outlining efforts to monitor and maintain the bags at the location are required. These reports should include date, time and general outline of actions taken to maintain the bags. All the information must be submitted in the form of an email to Matt Slagel, Manager of BCM's Beachfront Management Section, at [Matt.Slagel@des.sc.gov](mailto:Matt.Slagel@des.sc.gov).

12. For work conducted during the sea turtle nesting season (May 1st – October 31st), the applicant must monitor daily sea turtle activity each morning prior to work being performed on the beach. The applicant may be able to utilize volunteers from the SCDNR Marine Turtle Conservation Program to fulfill this requirement. If not, they must hire an environmental practitioner/consultant to do so. Regardless, a permit for monitoring for the purposes of avoiding and minimizing impacts to sea turtles associated with the proposed project must be acquired from SCDNR. Please visit the following link and choose Monitoring Permit: <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/seaturtle/permit.htm>. All nesting activity (evidence of successful nesting and false crawls) must be documented daily with GPS coordinates and photos. Any successful nests will need to be marked and all construction activities must avoid impacts to the nest and future hatchlings (e.g., do not place any obstacles, construction equipment, etc. in their pathway to access the ocean upon hatching). Should a nest be built within the construction footprint, please contact the SCDNR Marine Turtle Conservation Program Coordinator, Michelle Pate 843-384-0605 (cell) or 843-953-9052 (office). Construction should start no earlier than 10:00 am daily during the sea turtle nesting and hatching season. In the event a nest is disturbed during construction and/or an adult sea turtle or hatchling is encountered, all work must cease and the SCDNR Marine Turtle Conservation Program Coordinator should be contacted immediately.
  
13. A copy of the issued Emergency Order shall be in possession of anyone performing the placement of sandbags on the beach.

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Matthew J. Slagel  
Manager, Beachfront Management Section  
Bureau of Coastal Management  
SC Department of Environmental Services

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Date