

What You Need to Know About Jade Helm

This summer, the U.S. military is planning an unprecedented training exercise, happening across seven states on private lands and towns in the Southwest.

The Jade Helm 15 operation is making many residents feel uneasy. Speculation about why the military wants to train in American communities instead of on military bases is fueling a growing number of theories across the Internet and social media.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has even asked his National Guard to monitor it. So what is Jade Helm 15?

According to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, it's "realistic military training" taking place simultaneously in seven states from Southern California to Texas.

Over eight weeks, America's elite Special Forces will practice "unconventional warfare" by practicing operating outside their normal support systems, adapting to new terrain, and working with civilians to gain their trust.

When news of the operation broke, the phones inside Texas Rep. Louie Gohmert's office lit up.

"At first people were not sure what to think," the GOP lawmaker told CBN News. "Do we have to worry about martial law? Is our federal government coming in and going to practice imposing martial law on Texas?"

As a former Army captain, Gohmert said he understands the need for training, yet it bothers him that as part of the exercise the military is labeling Texas, Utah, and Southern California as "hostile."

"This is actually taking areas of our home country of the United States and saying Texas is hostile, Utah is hostile, Southern California is hostile and we gotta take it from the hostiles. I find that incredibly offensive," Gohmert said.

He also thinks it's no coincidence that the Jade Helm 15 map looks an awful lot like the 2012 political map. So-called "hostile" states are even colored red to match Republican strongholds.

The suspicion surrounding Jade Helm 15 is fueled by the fact that a vast majority of Americans simply don't trust the federal government. It's a level of mistrust that's peaked under the Obama administration, driven by what many consider to be violations of the Constitution and civil liberties.

There's another element of Jade Helm outside the training part that Cheryl Chumley, author of *Police State USA*, says Americans should be paying attention to. She says Jade Helm 15 is introducing a new type of warfare: the "Master of the Human Domain."

"What's going to happen is the special operations soldiers are going to be dressed in civilian clothes, driving civilian vehicles, and they're going to be tasked with striking up a rapport with the local citizens," Chumley explained.

It's a new strategy to root out terrorists since locals notice odd behavior first. In Jade Helm, citizens are part of the exercise.

"Watch out because that guy that strikes up a conversation with you at the local 7-Eleven, is he a Jade Helm 15 participant?" Chumley said. "You know, it's this psychological warfare that, it kind of messes with your mind a little bit."

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Special Forces moving about communities will wear arm bands.

"I feel confident in expressing to you, without having a lot of detailed knowledge of the particular exercise, is that the civil liberties and constitutional rights of American citizens will be in no way affected by this exercise," Earnest recently told reporters.

Despite conspiracy theories, Gohmert isn't worried that the U.S. military is going to issue martial law, but he's not happy with President Barack Obama.

"When my own Commander in Chief, through his subordinates, is just fine with, for games purposes, declaring an enemy of two or more of your states, I've got a real problem with that. That is the most insensitive, outrageous thing that a military commander can do," Gohmert said.

Meanwhile, Chumley urges Americans to always stay vigilant when it comes to the government.

"What I love most about America is our rights come from God, not government," she said. "And I think we need to hold fast to that principle because once that's gone then you just open the doors to more and more government encroachments."