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The water plant on Randall Road is rated to treat up to 15 million gallons a day from the city of Hot Springs' Lake Ouachita allocation (The Sentinel-Record/Anna-Claire Butler)

Hot Springs says new water plant pays dividends during hot, dry spell

DAVID SHOWERS
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

The Hot Springs regional water system's two active treatment plants have capacity to spare despite producing about 20 million gallons a day on average during July and the first three weeks of August.

City Manager Bill Burrough told the Hot Springs Board of Directors the abundance comes when other utilities are telling customers to conserve water. With the new plant that opened this spring in the Amity Road area, the city's water utility has had no issues meeting demand in the hot, dry weather that has prevailed for close to a month.

"We have several cities throughout Arkansas in conservation," he told the board Tuesday. "As of July 31, had we not had this new plant, we would've been back where we were in 2012, where we would see tanks falling quicker than we could fill them up. We have no voluntary or mandatory conservation, we're in very good shape with both of these plants in supplying water."

Production peaked at 22.8 million gallons July 31, according to totals the city's water utility provided in response to a records request. It exceeded the peak



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day from July of last year by 11.1%.

Daily production averaged 19.5 million gallons in July and 20.2 million during the first three weeks of this month. Hot Springs Memorial Field reported 1.10 inches of rain over that time, with 99.4 degrees the average high during the first 19 days of this month. The airport reported 13 days of triple-digit highs over that time.

Production during the first three weeks of the month peaked at 21.8 mil-

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Lakeside High School ranked No. 14 among Arkansas high schools in the latest U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools rankings released Tuesday. (The Sentinel-Record/File photo)

Lakeside ranks 14th among state's high schools

BRANDON SMITH
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

Lakeside High School remains the highest-ranked high school in Garland County, placing No. 14 in Arkansas in the latest U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools rankings released Tuesday.

Although Lakeside slipped one spot from No. 13 overall last year, it moved up when compared with traditional public high schools, rising from sixth to fifth in the state.

Lakeside School District Superintendent Bruce Orr said the recognition reflects years of work across the district, not just at the high school.

"We're very proud to receive this recognition," Orr told *The Sentinel-Record* in an email.

"Moving from No. 6 to No. 5 among traditional public high schools in Arkansas, while ranking No. 14 overall and as the highest-ranked high school in our area, is certainly something we're excited to celebrate. But more than anything, we're proud of what the ranking represents: consistent, sustained success for Lakeside students," he said.

All seven Garland County public schools were included in the state rankings. Jessierville High School was second-highest locally at No. 37, followed by Lake Hamilton High School at No. 59, Hot Springs World Class High School at No. 64 and Fountain Lake High School

at No. 91.

Cutter Morning Star High School ranked No. 207. Mountain Pine High School was placed in the 241-278 group.

U.S. News, according to its website, does not give individual rankings to schools that fall below the 25th percentile. Instead, those schools are listed together in the bottom quarter ranking range.

The rankings include traditional, charter and magnet public schools but do not include private schools.

Orr said Lakeside views its ranking as a result of work that begins well before students reach high school.

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HSNP offers free educational programs for area schools

WILL LIVINGSTON
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

Hot Springs National Park education rangers are offering free programs and educational services to school districts and students in Garland County and surrounding communities.

The thematic and curriculum-based programs for K-12 are offered in the park, in the school building or virtually.

"We provide K-12 education throughout the school year, and we host in-park visits," Hot Springs National Park acting interpretation program manager Cane West said. "We will go to schools and also meet with teachers and students virtually."

"We want every student in Garland County to come to the park in their backyard," he said.

West said students can greatly benefit from the educational pro-

grams provided by the National Park Service, with respect to the science and history of the geothermal springs in the Spa City.

"Hot Springs National Park is the nation's oldest national park. We preserve the signature 143-degree, non-volcanic thermal waters. We have a beautiful portion of the Ouachita Mountains, and we have the historic Bathhouse Row," he said. "For students in Garland County, the park and its programs are like a living laboratory to the stories and science of the community they live in."

"It's no exaggeration that very few school districts in the United States can access a national park 30 minutes from the schoolhouse door. But more importantly, the park and the waters and it's history are deeply linked to the story of every community in Garland County. So we take a

lot of pride in connecting students to the story of their hometown and how to conserve these lands and the waters."

The programs are not just for students attending one of the seven public schools in Garland County. Education rangers provide these kinds of programs for homeschool and private school students.

"The national park programs are free and accessible to any educational organization and group," West said. "Our various programs are designed to accommodate student and teacher logistics in a variety of ways. We typically get a number of, and host a number of, homeschool groups, in addition to private school and public school groups. We can even adjust our programs for school-age organizations like Scouts and other things."

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The Hot Springs National Park Administration Building, 101 Reserve St., is shown. (The Sentinel-Record/Will Livingston)



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