



NFL rankings: Which of the unbeatens takes over No. 1?

SPORTS, 1B

NORTHWEST FLORIDA

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Loud sounds have hidden health risks



When using power tools, lawn equipment or other machinery, wear properly fitted earplugs or earmuffs from the start, rather than waiting until the noise becomes uncomfortable. PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

Noise pollution a serious but often forgotten hazard

Laura Coco
San Diego State University | THE CONVERSATION

The human body is remarkably good at getting used to the environment around it. You’ve probably experienced this if you’ve ever gone to a matinee and emerged from the dark theater into sunshine. Your eyes sting, so you squint and shield your face until they adjust to the bright sunlight. • In the same way, the body can grow accustomed to constant noise. With repeated exposure to traffic, leaf blowers, construction, loud music, crowded restaurants, fitness classes and sporting events, you can become accustomed to loud environments. Over time, what once seemed unusually loud may barely register.

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Hearing damage is only part of the story. Noise acts as a stressor, activating the autonomic nervous and endocrine systems and affecting heart rate, blood pressure and other physiological processes.



Photographs are set up in memory of Colleen Slemmer, the woman Christa Pike was convicted of murdering in 1995, on Sept. 30, the day Pike was scheduled to be executed at a Tennessee prison.
DENNY SIMMONS/NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

Next steps in Pike case uncertain

Inmate may face second execution attempt

Amanda Lee Myers
USA TODAY

With the astonishing news that Christa Pike is conscious, talking and making a “medically unprecedented” recovery following her botched execution, Tennessee is now facing a critical question: Will the state try to kill her again?

“Against all odds, Christa Pike is conscious, speaking, and continues to receive critical medical care,” her attorneys said in a statement on Oct. 6. “Her prognosis remains unclear but, at a minimum, we expect a long recovery.”

They said that despite “severe damage” to Pike’s arms, “she is still handcuffed and shackled to the bed.”

“She survived two complete rounds of lethal injection per Tennessee’s protocol, despite her attorneys’ warning to the state of specific challenges with her veins,” her attorneys said. “She is the only person known to have survived a complete execution attempt in the U.S. Christa is a survivor and will take recovery one day at a time.”

So far, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has not responded to repeated calls from Pike’s attorneys and death penalty observers to commute her sentence to life in prison. That leaves open the possibility that Pike will face a second execution, even after her attorneys said the first attempt on Sept. 30 amounted to unconstitutionally cruel and unusual punishment.

“We’re in uncharted territory,” said

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Tropical Storm Isaias could strengthen into hurricane

Doyle Rice, Jeanine Santucci
and Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

Tropical Storm Isaias has formed in the Gulf, the National Hurricane Center announced early Oct. 7. It’s the ninth named tropical storm of the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season.

Unlike the previous eight storms, this one is forecast to strengthen into a hurricane and take aim at the Gulf Coast by Oct. 9, or early Oct. 10.

Isaias could have winds of over 100 mph by Oct. 9 as it approaches the U.S. coast, according to the center’s hurricane specialists. It’s forecast to peak before making landfall, but could still be a

“significant” hurricane when it reaches the coast with strong winds and flooding rain, the hurricane center said. It should then dramatically weaken.

Its exact track is not yet certain, but the hurricane center said residents from Louisiana to the Florida Panhandle should monitor closely and make sure they have a hurricane plan in place.

Isaias would be the first hurricane of the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season.

Some of the heaviest rain, totaling 8 to 12 inches, is expected across southern Alabama and southern Mississippi, near where the storm makes landfall, AccuWeather said.

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