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Drone strikes hit U.S. Embassy in Saudi Arabia



A plume of smoke rises after a strike on Tehran, Iran, on March 3. Secretary of State Marco Rubio predicted "the hardest hits are yet to come" against Iran. ATTA KENARE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

American personnel, citizens told to leave the region

Michael Loria, Zac Anderson, Jeanine Santucci, Francesca Chambers, Kim Hjelmgard and Michael Collins
USA TODAY

The United States ordered non-emergency government personnel and their family members to leave Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq and Jordan and closed several diplomatic missions across the Middle East on March 3 as the war with Iran escalated.

The move came as the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was hit by two drones in an attack that sparked a "lim-

ited fire and minor material damage to the building," a Saudi Defense Ministry spokesperson announced on the Ministry's X account.

The U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia issued a "security alert" recommending Americans to "shelter in place immediately and avoid the Embassy until further notice."

On March 2, the State Department urged American citizens across 16 countries in the Middle East to immediately depart the region using "available

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A U.S. F-35C Lightning II is staged for operations on the flight deck of aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln on March 2.

PROVIDED BY U.S. NAVY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

EPA faces suit over missed soot pollution deadline

Erica Van Buren
Augusta Chronicle
USA TODAY NETWORK

Environmental groups, including the Sierra Club, recently filed a joint notice of intent to sue the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, alleging the agency missed its Feb. 7 deadline to designate areas violating the 2024 national soot standard.

"The EPA has not responded to the notice of intent letter," Caroline Cress, senior attorney for the Southern Environmental Law Center, told The Augusta Chronicle in an email. "If EPA has not taken final action to designate areas in violation of the 2024 standard by mid-April, we can move forward with next steps to legally challenge EPA's failure to take that required action."

The national air quality standard for soot is required under the Clean Air Act. These designations are the first step toward bringing dangerous soot

See EPA, Page 2A

Defibrillator program aims to reduce fatalities in North Augusta

Joe Hotchkiss
Augusta Chronicle
USA TODAY NETWORK

North Augusta officials want to give residents the shock of their lives.

The city is partnering with a company that produces defibrillators in a program designed to improve response times to treat victims of cardiac arrest.

Under the 4 Minute Community Program, automated external defibrillators will be placed in strategic locations across the city with volunteers trained in CPR to "increase bystander intervention and provide rapid response" for people experiencing severe cardiac events, according to San Francisco-based company Avive Solutions.

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Augusta's 911 Center wins top state award

Jennifer Miller
Augusta Chronicle
USA TODAY NETWORK

Augusta's 911 Center was named the 2025 Communications Center of the Year during the recent Georgia Emergency Communications Confer-

ence in Athens.

The award recognizes a 911 center that demonstrates strong performance in emergency response coordination, training, technology, and community engagement, according to a news release from the city.

"This recognition reflects the work

our team does every single day," said Daniel Dunlap, the 911 director for Augusta. "Our communications officers are the first point of contact during some of the most difficult moments in a person's life. They provide reassurance, direction, and critical coordination until help arrives."



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