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Photos by Chad Dare | Commercial-News

Portions of the gymnasium roof from Mark Denman Grade School in Danville lie across Colfax Street on Friday morning after being blown off during Thursday's severe thunderstorms.

## Preparation, planning are essential when facing storms

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DANVILLE — Time is of the essence in an emergency, with preparation and planning being the key to success.

Zach Weddle, Director of Oakwood Ambulance, shares his perspective on how preparation and planning come into play during severe weather events like the ones Vermilion County experienced Thursday evening.

"Planning is 99% of handling an emergency situation," Weddle says. "That is where training and planning come into play — 100% — we train constantly, we plan constantly, plans change, things get updated, policies get written."

While not technically on duty Thursday evening, when the high winds struck, knocking down trees, blowing debris, and more into roadways, homes, and cars, Weddle still did his part to help.

"I did have on-duty crews that did go out on calls, and I was maintaining communication with them throughout the entirety of the storm last night," Weddle said. "There was fairly significant damage done in the Oakwood-Muncie-Fithian area that then continued into the Danville area, and through all of the major 911 call volume, the Vermilion County Dispatch Center with the telecommunicators did a fantastic job of trying to make sure resources went where they needed to go in the most timely manner and made everybody operate as a well-oiled machine."

And on Thursday evening, while Oakwood Ambulance only responded to a few calls, Weddle says there was also an incident on I-74 involving a vehicle going off the road. So he did his best to manage the crew in responding, by limiting radio communication so others could receive vital 911 calls at the same time.

"All while trying to find out exactly where this incident had occurred and what resources were needed, presents a pretty unique challenge," Weddle described. "It's a lot of behind-the-scenes work, even after the dispatch goes off."

Weddle said many of the calls last

See **PLANNING** on 4

# County cleans up

## Thunderstorms take out power, uproot trees

**CHRISTY JANKOWSKI**

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DANVILLE — Thursday's severe thunderstorms took out trees, roofs and power lines.

Residents looked out for each other after the storms left trees strewn across roadways and part of gymnasium roof at Mark Denman Elementary went flying and so much more. Many are still without power.

Bev and Joe Potter live off Perrysville Road and they had photos showing a large tree that came down on their property, narrowly missing their home.

"About 7:45 p.m. last night, the storm blew through," Bev Potter said. "The wind picked up very fast for a few minutes, and we heard this noise that we thought was possibly siding coming off. I looked out the side window in the living room and could see that the tree had come down, missing the house, but lying on our propane tank."

Bev says there is, fortunately, no leak in the

See **CLEAN UP** on 4



A tree across from the Dr. David L. Fields Administrative Service Center on East Williams in Danville was blown apart by strong winds during Thursday's storms.

# Illinois distributes first \$25 million to local pharmacies

**MAGGIE DOUGHERTY**  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

CHICAGO — Gov. JB Pritzker announced Friday that 434 Illinois pharmacies will receive nearly \$25 million in support, the first distribution of annual funding established through legislation he signed last year.

The fund was designed to assist pharmacies most at risk of closure or financial strain, especially those in rural and low-income communities with limited healthcare access. The pot was split equally between all eligible applicants, with each pharmacy receiving \$56,892.

"Local pharmacies are often

one of the most accessible and affordable points of care for working families, seniors, and Medicaid patients — providing medications, vaccinations, and trusted health care services," Pritzker said in a news release.

The money was established under bipartisan legislation Pritzker signed last July. The

bill, known as the Prescription Drug Affordability Act, put new regulations on pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, companies that are responsible for negotiating drug prices between employer health insurance plans and pharmaceutical drug companies.

They have been the target of intense scrutiny in recent years,

facing accusations of steering patients toward their own affiliated pharmacies and designing healthcare pricing formulas that boost their own profits rather than patient savings, including a lawsuit from the Federal Trade Commission against the



**JB Pritzker**

See **PHARMACIES** on 4



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### WEATHER



**Today:** Mostly sunny and hot start to the weekend.

**85 | 65**

Full forecast on Page 2.

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