



Jim Murphy earns spot in Monroe County Sports Hall of Fame

SPORTS, 1B

The Herald-Times

MONDAY, JULY 14, 2025 | HERALDTIMESONLINE.COM BLOOMINGTON, IND. | PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Bloomington's drinking water has turned brown

But is it bad for your health?

Boris Ladwig
The Herald-Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Bloomington's drinking water for days has been discolored with a brown tint. Here's what you need to know.

What's causing Bloomington's water to be brown?

The City of Bloomington Utilities said the discoloration is caused by "seasonal changes and unusually high water levels" in Lake Monroe, from where the utility draws its water. The high water has released "naturally occurring minerals — primarily iron and manganese — from deeper lake layers where oxygen levels are low."

Should you be concerned about your health if you drink the water?

CBU said the minerals "do not pose a health risk for short-term, low exposure." The utility also said the minerals "are not regulated as primary contaminants by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency." The EPA says on its website that it has recommended standards for iron, manganese and other contaminants such as copper and silver, but does not require states to comply with the standards — though utilities may be required to notify the public if certain thresholds are exceeded. The EPA said it has established these so-called "secondary standards" for reasons including that they may cause skin or tooth discoloration or a bad

See **WATER**, Page 2A



A Bloomington resident said the city's water turned his water filter from white to brown in a matter of days, whereas they usually last at least three months. PROVIDED BY MICHAEL WELBER

CBU said the minerals "do not pose a health risk for short-term, low exposure." The utility also said the minerals "are not regulated as primary contaminants by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency."

MCCSC to offer online school for 2025-26

Brian Rosenzweig
The Herald-Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Monroe County Community School Corp. will launch an integrated online school program for the 2025-2026 school year. The free online school will offer synchronous and asynchronous virtual learning options for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Enrollment applications will open in late July, and online school will begin on Aug. 6, the same day MCCSC schools start classes. The program will be open to all K-12 students in Indiana, regardless of if they're districted within the corporation. The MCCSC school board unanimously approved the online school program during the July 8 board meeting. Administrators hope the online school will improve flexibility for students with medical, mental health and travel needs and will boost student numbers as the corporation faces enrollment decreases.

See **SCHOOL**, Page 2A



First grader Nash Porter attends virtual school from his iPad in 2021. RICH JANZARUK/HERALD-TIMES

Another weather forecasting tool is getting scrapped

Experts: Government cuts damage U.S. status as global science leader

Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

The heart-wrenching July 4 flooding in Texas served as a stark reminder of the importance of accurate and timely weather forecasts. As extreme rainfall events grow more intense, such tragedies are expected to increase. Further improvement to forecasts is critical, but meteorologists worry that with the additional cuts planned by the Trump administration, the nation's weather and climate research programs won't be able to keep up. The latest blow was the announcement by the U.S. Navy that it would no longer transmit data from aging satellites past June 30, roughly 15 months earlier than expected. Later, the department extended the deadline to July 31. Without those satellite images, hurricane forecast accuracy could be compromised, say current and former scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmos-



An aerial view shows flash flood damage along the banks of the Guadalupe River in Kerrville, Texas, on July 11. CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

pheric Administration. Polar researchers, who use the images to measure the extent of sea ice, hope to acquire the same data through a Japanese government satellite instead. In any other year, the satellite snafu might not have gathered much attention. But this summer, it exacerbates mounting concerns about the accuracy

of weather prediction amid contract cancellations, staff reductions and other Trump administration efforts to reduce the federal bureaucracy. "You can't keep taking tools away from people and expect them to get the same result," said Andy Hazelton, a hurricane scientist at the University of Miami. Hazelton had been hired as a NOAA

scientist last October and was dismissed in the Trump administration's widespread agency layoffs. USA TODAY interviewed more than a dozen industry veterans, including a half-dozen former NOAA scientists, as well as independent researchers, who all fear that forecasts for hurricanes and other extreme weather events may become less accurate and that efforts to monitor the warming climate could be disrupted. The flash flood deaths in Texas on Independence Day weekend are not being blamed on poor forecasts, but weather scientists say the tragedy is emblematic of what can happen when forecasts become less accurate. They cite several concerning developments, including: ● Hundreds of probationary employees were laid off and incentive packages sent hundreds more to early retirement, creating staffing shortages. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick recently told Congress there's a plan to hire more than 100 people to fill vacancies in the National Weather Service, but as of July 9, no

See **WEATHER**, Page 5A

