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Local nursing home’s tater tot dinner sparks ire

Jon Webb
Evansville Courier & Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

EVANSVILLE – Scott Blanford couldn’t believe it.

He was sitting with his wife in his mother’s room at Newburgh Health and Rehab on Sunday evening when an employee delivered dinner. Usually, the senior living facility on Pollack Avenue provides more balanced meals. But that night was different.

Scattered across an otherwise empty plate was the main course: 12 tater tots. Their only companions were a small dish of fruit and a cup of now-cold soup with what looked like a piece of celery floating in the broth.

“When they pulled the lid off and I saw nothing but tater tots ... you know, my wife actually stuck her head out in the hallway and said, ‘What is going on?’” he told the Courier & Press. “Can they not afford meat?”

That night he went home and did something he said he never does: made a frustrated post on Facebook. Alongside a picture of the tots, he wrote that he’d filed a formal complaint with the state of Indiana, and he expressed disbelief that a facility charging thousands of dollars for care would offer such a sparse supper.

The post has since sparked hundreds of comments and reactions. The local employees who care for his mother, Norma Jean Blanford, are “great people,” he wrote. So he had to wonder if the blame for the dinner rested instead with the facility’s corporate owners, New-Jersey-based GreenTree.

He said he’s since been told that corporate cuts have left employees scrounging for some supplies. Some workers reportedly had to go to the grocery store themselves to buy bread and eggs after the facility’s supply ran low. And according to inspection documents



A photo taken by Scott Blanford shows his mother’s dinner at Newburgh Health and Rehab on Oct. 6. He said the sparse meal is just one of several issues at the senior living facility. PROVIDED BY SCOTT BLANFORD



Newburgh Health and Rehab Center is located at 10466 Pollack Avenue in Newburgh. MACABE BROWN/COURIER & PRESS

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Tri-State could see buckets of rain from Isaias

Jon Webb
Evansville Courier & Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

EVANSVILLE – Parts of the Tri-State could get about 2 inches of rain this weekend. Or as much as 5. Or hardly any at all.

That’s the uncertain nature of Tropical Storm Isaias, the large storm currently roaring toward the Gulf Coast. It’s expected to hit the shores of Mississippi and Alabama on Friday as a hurricane before marching north toward Evansville.

On Wednesday, Justin Gibbs – lead forecaster at the Paducah, Kentucky office of the National Weather Service – said the storm should hit the city sometime late Saturday night or early Sunday morning.

What happens after that, though, is still uncertain.

As of now, the models have the Evansville area broadly getting about 2 inches of rain between Saturday and Sunday. But that varies wildly, Gibbs said. Some locales could see as much as 5 inches, while others might be “shut out.”

“Whether it’s flooding rain or not is up in the air,” he said. “(Will it be) enough to cause issues? It’s certainly possible.”

He said forecasters should have a better grip on the forecast later Wednesday. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration had sent aircraft flying over the storm in an attempt to map its path and strength.

A graphic from the National Hurricane Center showed the weakened remnants of the storm hitting Evansville directly around 1 a.m. Sunday.

One year on, Trump’s Gaza plan stalled

Deal hasn’t halted Israeli fire or disarmed Hamas

REUTERS

JERUSALEM – President Donald Trump’s year-old plan to end the Gaza war has stalled, with Israel mounting near-daily attacks and occupying around two-thirds of the shattered enclave where Palestinians face dire conditions.

The initial phase resulted in a ceasefire on Oct. 10, 2025, and secured the release of the last remaining hostages seized in Hamas’ 2023 attacks on Israel, along with freedom for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and detainees held by Israel.

But other goals, including disarming Hamas, securing Israeli withdrawal and rebuilding Gaza, appear far from reach.

What was in the plan?

The first phase of Trump’s 20-point plan included a suspension of all mili-

tary operations, Israeli withdrawal from part of the enclave, hostage and prisoner releases and a surge in aid.

Later phases foresaw Hamas disarming and new governance by a Palestinian body overseen by the Trump-led Board of Peace. Israel would gradually withdraw, handing territory to a temporary International Stabilization Force, or ISF.

“Gaza will be redeveloped for the benefit of the people of Gaza, who have suffered more than enough,” the plan said.

Has the ceasefire held?

There has been no return to full-scale military operations, but Israeli strikes have continued. Gaza’s health ministry says at least 1,400 Palestinians have been killed since the October 2025 ceasefire, many of them women and children, although it does not disclose militant casualties.

Israel says its strikes have targeted

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An EU and U.N. assessment estimated Gaza recovery and reconstruction needs at \$71.4 billion over the next decade. BASHAR TALEB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

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