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MD property search tool down

Suspicious activity detected on servers

Julie E. Greene

The Herald-Mail

USA TODAY NETWORK - DELMARVA

Maryland's online real property search tool has been down for almost a week after state officials detected suspi-

cious activity on servers running the search's website application.

The Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation issued a news release Saturday, April 18, stating the Maryland Department of Information Technology detected the suspicious ac-

tivity on Tuesday, April 14, and "quickly took the website offline to contain potential threats and conduct an investigation of the suspicious activity."

The page will stay offline until the system is cleared for public use. It remained down on Monday, April 20.

Analysis from the information technology department's Office of Security Management "suggests that all compro-

mised systems contained only public information already accessible through the Real Property Search web application," the release states.

Among the data the online search tool allows the public to look up is property ownership by address and sale prices as well as recent property sales.

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A banner bearing names and messages to crime victims is carried into the Hagerstown Seventh-day Adventist Church on April 19 during the 36th annual Victims' Memorial Service for Maryland's Western Region. The region includes Montgomery, Frederick, Carroll, Washington, Allegany and Garrett counties.

PHOTOS BY MARKELL DELOATCH/SPECIAL TO THE HERALD-MAIL

Crime Victims' Memorial Service held in Hagerstown



Survivor Steven Shoemaker was the guest speaker for the 36th annual Victims' Memorial Service for Maryland's Western Region.



Denise Duckett, a survivor, does a poetry reading during the Victims' Memorial Service for Maryland's Western Region at the Hagerstown Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Names of crime victims, many with messages to loved ones, are applied to a banner for the 36th annual Victims' Memorial Service for Maryland's Western Region on April 19 at Hagerstown Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Answers sought after Louisiana massacre

Man kills 8 children; 7 were his own

Christopher Cann, Makenzie Boucher and N'dea Yancey-Bragg

USA TODAY NETWORK

SHREVEPORT, LA - Residents of this historic riverfront city remained shaken a day after a gunman opened fire April 19 and killed eight children in the nation's deadliest mass shooting since January 2024.

They were looking for explanations - and authorities were trying to provide them, piecing together information on the tragedy.

Police said the suspect, identified as Shamar Elkins, also shot the mother of his children and another woman, both of whom survived with serious injuries. Elkins then fled the scene on foot and stole a car at gunpoint, leading to a police chase that ended with officers shooting him dead, according to police.

The victims killed were Jayla Elkins, 3; Shayla Elkins, 5; Kayla Pugh, 6; Layla Pugh, 7; Markaydon Pugh, 10; Sariah Snow, 11; Khedarrion Snow, 6; and Braylon Snow, 5, the Caddo Parish Coroner's Office said. Seven of them were Shamar Elkins' children.

"I just don't know what to say - my heart is just taken aback," Shreveport Police Chief Wayne Smith said on April 19, adding that the attack was unlike anything he had ever seen in his more than four decades in law enforcement.

"It's indescribably disturbing," said U.S. Rep. Cleo Fields, who represents Shreveport, "perhaps one of the worst tragedies this city has ever seen."

But the motive for the killings and what set the tragedy in motion was still unknown, authorities said. Elkins is believed to be the only suspect involved.

Shreveport officials described the shooting as an act of domestic violence, saying Elkins shot the mother of his children and another woman. Court records show Elkins married Shaniequa Pugh in April 2024. Another woman, Christina Snow, sued Elkins for child support; they were granted joint custody of their child, Sariah, in 2017, court records show.

"From the time Sariah was born I

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