



## New OC Beck could determine Wolverines' fortunes for 2026

SPORTS, 1B

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TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026 | THEDAILYREPORTER.COM

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# Tornado upgraded to EF-1 by weather service



Part of this historic 1860s barn was torn off and dropped on the roof of the nearby pole barn off Sanford Road by the April 15 tornado. PHOTOS BY DON REID/COLDWATER REPORTER

## Twister traveled more than two miles; damaged portion of solar farm

**Don Reid**  
Coldwater Daily Reporter  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The National Weather Service upgraded the Wednesday, April 15 tornado in Branch County to an EF-1 with maximum winds of 85 to 90 mph.

The tornado was about 100 yards wide and traveled 2.59 miles south of Marble Lake.

Based on reports and photos from Branch County Emergency Management, forecasters said that within a line of thunderstorms moving east-south-east, "a circulation may have attempted to touch down on Sanford Road, north of Fenn Road" around 1:04 a.m.

Fewer than two dozen panels at the Apex Solar farm were damaged.

Minor treetop damage was observed from Sanford Road to near Interstate 69. The report said the circulation ultimately tore the roof off a pole barn at Carleton Equipment on E. Fenn Road, east of the I-69 interchange.

The tornado continued southeast, causing tree damage until reaching Dubendorf and Quimby Road, where a garage lost its roof, trees were downed, and vinyl pool fencing was destroyed.



This section of the Apex Coldwater solar farm was taken offline for repair after less than two dozen panels were damaged by the April 15 tornado.

The tornado then struck a pole barn on South Wood Road, throwing debris far into an adjacent field before lifting.

Brian O'Shea from Apex Solar said, "We are thinking of our neighbors in

Coldwater and Ovid Townships, and the broader Coldwater community as we assess the full extent of the storm's

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**Byron McCauley**  
Columnist  
USA TODAY NETWORK

## Mother's intuition guided her to her child

CHEBOYGAN – Amber Noel didn't want to wait to find out.

On the eve of another round of rain, with flood warnings hanging over the Cheboygan River, she got in her car with her fiancé and drove from Alpena to pick up her 23-year-old daughter, Molly, whose residence is just a few blocks away from the water's edge.

"I didn't want to risk it," Noel said. "She has no means of transportation out of here. There's nobody else close by. I made the trek today because there was no guarantee I'd be able to get through tomorrow."

By nightfall on April 14, weather forecasters predicted more rain to fall here overnight and possibly cause the

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# Branch County homeowners will see lower tax bills

**Don Reid**  
Coldwater Daily Reporter  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Branch County homeowners will see lower tax bills after county commissioners voted Thursday, April 16 to roll back the 2018 jail millage, following higher-than-expected tax collections.

The Board of Commissioners will for-

mally approve trimming the jail construction levy from 1.231 mills to 0.78 mills — a roughly 36% reduction — when millages are approved in the coming months.

The county had the option to shorten the repayment schedule on the 2020 jail bonds from the original 2037-38 payoff date or reduce taxes.

County Administrator Frank Walsh



**Shembarger**

Lyndsey Shembarger said the millage can be adjusted annually to account

noted that the IRS imposes a penalty for arbitrage if investment earnings on bond revenues outpace the interest paid on the original borrowing.

Equalization Director Lyndsey Shembarger said the millage can be adjusted annually to account

for any future decline in property tax valuations.

The commission cannot exceed the original millage rate under its annual Headlee adjustments.

The bonds, totaling just over \$24.2 million, were issued six years ago to finance construction of the new Branch

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