



Next steps in Pike case uncertain

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Loud sounds have hidden health risks



When using power tools, lawn equipment or other machinery, wear properly fitted earplugs or earmuffs from the start, rather than waiting until the noise becomes uncomfortable. PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

Noise pollution a serious but often forgotten hazard

Laura Coco
San Diego State University | THE CONVERSATION

The human body is remarkably good at getting used to the environment around it. You’ve probably experienced this if you’ve ever gone to a matinee and emerged from the dark theater into sunshine. Your eyes sting, so you squint and shield your face until they adjust to the bright sunlight. • In the same way, the body can grow accustomed to constant noise. With repeated exposure to traffic, leaf blowers, construction, loud music, crowded restaurants, fitness classes and sporting events, you can become accustomed to loud environments. Over time, what once seemed unusually loud may barely register.

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Hearing damage is only part of the story. Noise acts as a stressor, activating the autonomic nervous and endocrine systems and affecting heart rate, blood pressure and other physiological processes.

Tropical Storm Isaias could become hurricane

Doyle Rice, Jeanine Santucci
and Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

Tropical Storm Isaias has formed in the Gulf, the National Hurricane Center announced early Oct. 7. It’s the ninth named tropical storm of the 2026 Atlantic hurricane season. Unlike the previous eight storms,

this one is forecast to strengthen into a hurricane and take aim at the Gulf Coast by Oct. 9, or early Oct. 10. Isaias could have winds of over 100 mph by Oct. 9 as it approaches the U.S. coast, according to the center’s hurricane specialists. It’s forecast to peak before making landfall, but could still be a “significant” hurricane when it reaches the coast with strong winds

and flooding rain, the hurricane center said. It should then dramatically weaken. Its exact track is not yet certain, but the hurricane center said residents from Louisiana to the Florida Panhandle should monitor closely and make sure they have a hurricane plan in place.

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Some lawmakers have suggested expanding Medicare to ensure health coverage that currently relies heavily on employers. SHANNON STAPLETON/REUTERS FILE

Poll: Most Americans support ‘Medicare for all’

Amina Niasse
REUTERS

NEW YORK – Most Americans now favor government-paid health insurance for all, according to a new poll, as voters across party lines see major health care reforms as a priority less than a month before midterm elections to decide control of Congress. Two-thirds of U.S. adults – up from 53% in 2020 – said they are in favor of universal U.S. health insurance often referred to as “Medicare for all,” according to a poll conducted by health policy research firm KFF released on Oct. 6. When told such a single-payer model would eliminate private insurance plans, that overall support dropped to 52% – still well ahead of the 37% favorability seen in the 2020 survey.

Medicare is the U.S. government program that provides health coverage to about 70 million people aged 65 and older or with disabilities. Lawmakers, including U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vermont, have suggested expanding Medicare to ensure health coverage that currently relies heavily on employers. Most developed countries have a single-payer system. The poll also found broad bipartisan support for a complete redesign of the U.S. health care system at a time of economic uncertainty for many voters. “All year, KFF polls have shown that the public is frustrated with the high cost of health care, and that may be leading to a desire for change,” said Audrey Kearney, a senior survey analyst at KFF.

Health care expenses were the leading economic concern for Americans surveyed, with 60% of respondents saying they are very or somewhat worried about affording health costs. Gasoline and grocery costs followed at 59% and 52%, respectively. KFF’s survey, conducted in September, includes responses from 1,328 U.S. adults, the vast majority of them registered voters. Several progressive candidates this year in states that could help

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