



A VERY N.J. EMMYS

WITH HOMEGROWN TALENT AND LOCAL CONNECTIONS BEHIND SOME OF THE MOST LAUDED SHOWS OF THE YEAR, NEW JERSEY WILL BE WELL REPRESENTED AT THE 77TH EMMY AWARDS. **F1**

EXTREME WEATHER

Two killed as floodwaters fill streets

Women swept away in vehicle: Plainfield has now seen 4 storm deaths this month.  
Dozens of water rescues across state: Watchung inundated with 6.5 inches of rain.

Jeff Goldman For Times of Trenton

Two women were killed when their vehicle was swept into surging floodwaters in Plainfield during Monday night’s severe storms, city officials said.

The vehicle became submerged around 8 p.m. and was pulled into Cedar Brook in the area of Stelle Avenue, a city spokeswoman said.

Both are Plainfield residents, according to Mayor Adrian Mapp, though their names and ages were not immediately released.

The deaths are the third and fourth due to severe storms in the city this month. Two men were killed in Plainfield on July 3 when their car was hit by a fallen tree on Myrtle Avenue. A third person was killed that day in North Plainfield.

“All of Plainfield grieves this latest loss,” Mapp said Tuesday. “To lose four residents in a short span of time is unimaginable. We mourn with the families and remain committed to doing all we can to strengthen our emergency response systems and protect our residents from future harm.”

Dozens of water rescues occurred around the state on Monday night as torrential rain from slow-moving thunderstorms hit the state. Up to 6.5 inches of rain fell in a short period of time over Watchung, where the borough’s rescue squad said firefighters and police rescued many people from vehicles during flooding.

Images shared with NJ Advance Media from Watchung show a car perched atop a concrete barrier with others vehicles half submerged in water.

Edison got 5.35 inches of rain, with Mountainside close behind at 5.34 inches.

Just south of Watchung, a house exploded in North Plainfield during the storms, though the occupants escaped and no one was injured.

The explosion occurred at about 2:45 p.m. on the 600 block of Parkwood Avenue, North Plainfield police said.

Police said a gas leak likely triggered the explosion of the house, which was fully engulfed in flames when emergency responders arrived.

About 40 people in North Plainfield were rescued from floodwaters and “countless” homes were damaged and vehicles destroyed, police said in a statement.

In addition, police towed at least 35 vehicles that were flooded or washed away by the force of the water Monday evening.

Water rescues also were reported in Scotch Plains in Union County. Residents were told they could shelter in the courtroom at the municipal building and at St. Bartholomew Church, authorities said.

In Berkeley Heights, police chief William Ives said 15 streets were completely inundated. Some roads were damaged as floodwaters washed away portions of asphalt. Police and firefighters made three water rescues, though no one was injured.

In South Plainfield, firefighters made more than 50 rescues, the fire department said.

SEE EXTREME WEATHER, A6



Jennifer Siegel-Luersen stands in a street filled with flood debris in North Plainfield on Tuesday. Seth Wenig, Associated Press



A man looks over a road that partially collapsed into a brook in North Plainfield. Seth Wenig, Associated Press



A car from a dealership on Route 22 sits in the Stony Brook on Tuesday in North Plainfield. Amanda Brown, for Times of Trenton

EDUCATION

N.J. sues Trump administration over education funding freeze

He’s “acting like a king,” state’s AG says of president.

Liz Rosenberg For Times of Trenton

New Jersey has joined 23 other states in suing the Trump administration for freezing \$158 million in essential funding for school programs that support immigrant children as well as students with special needs.

Districts found out the funds were being withheld on July 1 without warning, said Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin, who added that Trump’s actions are illegal.

“The president is acting like a king and withholding funds that Congress has said must be spent,” Platkin said.

He says the administration is violating laws that govern the separation of powers as well as the Administrative Procedures Act.

Nationwide, districts lost access to over \$6 billion in federal funds slated to pay for summer and after-school programs, teacher training and adult education.

The other states listed on the suit are California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin.

The governors of Kentucky and Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia are also listed.

The suit asks the court to declare the funding freeze unlawful, as courts have repeatedly done in other multi-state cases, and block any attempts to withhold or delay this essential funding, Platkin said.

The federal Office of Management and Budget says it is conducting a programmatic review.

“Initial findings show that many of these

grant programs have been grossly misused to subsidize a radical left-wing agenda,” said an OMB spokesperson.

The spokesperson offered three examples of violations, none of which occurred in New Jersey.

Attorney General Platkin questioned why the federal government chose not to warn districts in advance that a review was underway or that critical funds would not be available.

He said millions of New Jersey families rely on educational services that are federally funded.

“How you could punish families who rely on these programs to score political points, frankly, it’s disgusting and has no justification in law,” Platkin, who has two children, said.

Platkin said the state has signed on to more than two dozen lawsuits fighting Trump administration policies.

SEE EDUCATION, A8



MIDDLESEX COUNTY Affordable housing may replace raceway

One of N.J.’s oldest motorsports raceways could be redeveloped to make way for hundreds of affordable housing units. Old Bridge Raceway Park in Englishtown is one of three sites township officials have identified to help meet its court-mandated housing obligations. **A4**