



## IRS scams increasing this tax season

NEWS, 2A

# Ashland TIMES-GAZETTE

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A fence separates the path from the C&O Canal where millions of gallons of untreated sewage were being diverted in Cabin John, Maryland, on Feb. 16. A section of the Potomac Interceptor, a sewage pipe, collapsed on Jan. 19. CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

# U.S. has a looming sewage problem

## Wastewater systems often receive a 'D' grade

Dinah Voyles Pulver  
USA TODAY

Officials and engineers have warned for decades of a growing crisis with the aging systems that handle the billions of gallons of water flowing from toilets, tubs and washing machines across the country every day.

So when news broke of the untreated wastewater spill into the Potomac River in January, it wasn't a surprise to industry experts.

"When you think about the number of miles of wastewater pipes in the ground, and the age of them, and the fact that for many, many years they have been underfunded, it's not surprising that things like this can occur," said Darren Olson, a professional engineer who chairs the Committee on America's Infrastructure for the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The society produces a "report card" of letter grades for each category of the nation's infrastructure every four years. Wastewater consistently earns a "D."

An estimated 3 million to 10 million gallons of wastewater are spilled annually in the United States, but no national data exists showing total discharges, USA TODAY previously reported.



In August 2025, intense rain in Milwaukee led to 5.14 billion gallons of untreated wastewater from the city's combined sewer being discharged into nearby waterways and Lake Michigan.

CAITLIN LOOBY/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL FILE

While the federal government used to fund more than 60% of infrastructure improvements, Olson said today the federal funds cover less than 10%, and the costs for repairing, maintaining and

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# Poll: 60% of Americans disapprove of Trump

## Numbers lowest on issues such as inflation, tariffs

Kathryn Palmer  
USA TODAY

Ahead of President Donald Trump's first State of the Union address of his second term, a new poll shows a majority of Americans disapprove of the president's job performance, especially on inflation, tariffs and foreign policy.

In a Washington Post-ABC News-Ipsos poll released on Feb. 22 - two days before Trump's highly anticipated address to Congress - 60% of Americans said they disapprove of the way he is handling his role. Of that number, 47% indicated a strong disapproval. Another 39% said they approve of the president's performance.

The pollster said the last time Trump's disapproval touched 60% was shortly after the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The five-day poll was conducted among 2,589 U.S. adults from Feb. 12-17 and has a margin of error of 2 percentage points.

A New York Times average of other recent

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# New dietary guidelines could hit sugar industry

Marcelo Teixeira  
REUTERS

NEW YORK - The U.S. sugar industry could be impacted by regulatory changes as the federal government prepares to implement stricter dietary guidelines that could further reduce domestic demand for the sweetener, a top industry executive said on Feb. 19.

New school meal standards, updated dietary recommendations calling for zero added sugars, and rising use of GLP-1 weight-loss drugs could reduce sugar consumption at a time when federal agencies are also working to define what is classified as "processed food," potentially triggering new labeling requirements or taxes on products.

Courtney Gaine, president and CEO of the Sugar Association, a scientific body that supports the U.S. sugar industry, told the USDA Outlook Forum that the school meal standards taking effect next year might prohibit added sugars in kindergarten meals and

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