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Can cloud seeding control the weather?



A technician works at a cloud-seeding generator high atop the Sierra. Five cloud-seeding generators seed storms with silver iodide particles, enhancing ice particle formation in storm clouds and boosting the snowpack for the Tahoe-Truckee area. JASON BEAN/RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL FILE

## Extreme events, such as Texas flooding in July, often stir up long-running conspiracies

Hayleigh Evans Arizona Republic | USA TODAY NETWORK

PHOENIX – In early July, a storm dumped as much as 20 inches of rain in parts of central Texas, the equivalent of months’ worth of rain. It swelled the Guadalupe River with such devastating force that at least 130 people died in the flooding, including dozens of children. ● Amid the grief and confusion, blame emerged in an unexpected place. A small cloud-seeding flight conducted by a startup named Rain-maker two days prior became the target of unfounded accusations. Elected officials and online influencers questioned whether the operation triggered or worsened the deluge. ● The flight, more than 100 miles away and lasting about 20 minutes, released 70 grams of silver iodide into a set of clouds and prompted a drizzle that produced less than half a centimeter of rain on farmlands struggling with drought. Scientists said the distance made it scientifically impossible for the small seeding event to have played a role in the flooding. Even if it had, it would have been an insignificant amount of rain.

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## Tensions flare between trans, religion rights

Jessica Guynn  
USA TODAY

Jocelyn Boden, 47, managed a Bath & Body Works store for 3½ years in West Valley City, Utah. In March, she hired a transgender man as a retail associate and, during their first shift together, Boden said she twice referred to the employee as “she” in keeping with her faith as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which teaches that gender is an immutable characteristic of a person’s “eternal identity.” After two associates corrected her, Boden informed her manager she would use the employee’s chosen name but would not “degrade my religious and moral beliefs by lying and calling this biological girl a he,” she told USA TODAY. Boden was fired. Her termination notice cited “unwanted conduct directed at an individual based on their sex, which includes sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or transgender status.” She says her termination was religious discrimination. Boden is at the forefront of a growing conflict between religious freedoms and transgender and nonbinary rights in the workplace. While some say correct pronoun usage to affirm someone’s identity is a matter of basic respect, others view expectations they will use someone’s chosen gender pronouns as an infringement of their First Amendment’s protection of religious freedom. The standoff has only intensified as the political and legal landscape has shifted. When an employee objects on religious grounds to using a colleague’s pronouns that are not consistent with their sex assigned at birth, “you have a clash of rights,” said Jonathan Segal, a partner with the Duane Morris law firm who advises companies on how to comply with discrimination laws. “The question,” he said, “is which one gives?”

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