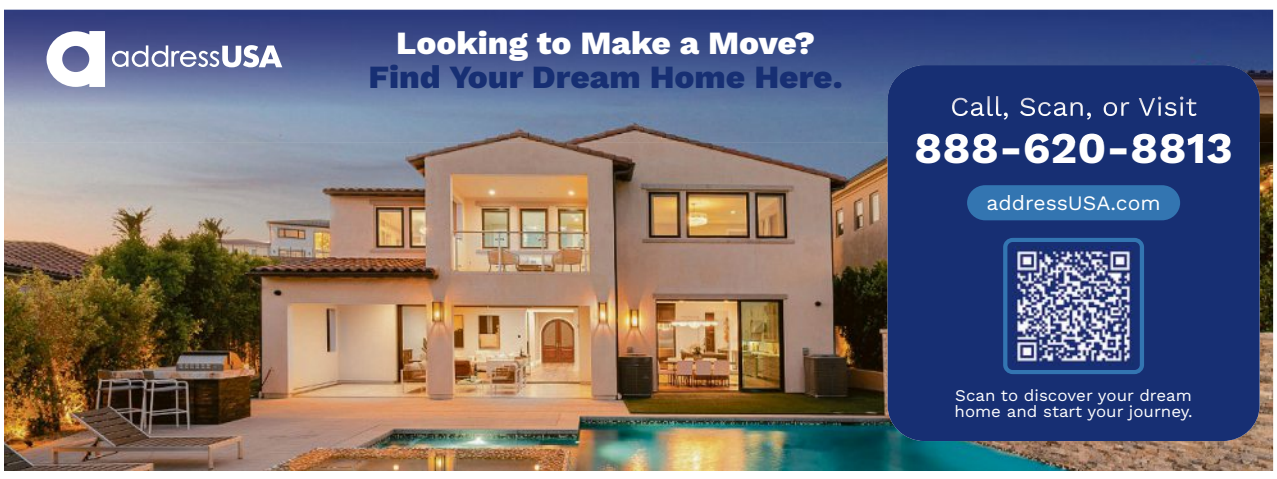


Cignetti, Smart top list for best coaches in college football

SPORTS, 1B

Oshkosh Northwestern

SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2026 | THENORTHWESTERN.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

The haze from the Canada wildfire smoke is seen near Lake Winnebago in Oshkosh on July 15. Some days are clear enough to see across the lake. PHOTOS BY RHONDA CLARK/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

In a haze

Will Oshkosh's poor air quality impact EAA AirVenture?

Daphne Lemke
Fond du Lac Reporter
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

OSHKOSH – EAA AirVenture opens July 20, but poor air quality from northern wildfire smoke has settled into the city.

As crews prepare for the event, some enthusiasts have been keeping an eye on the local air quality through the livestreams on eaa.org/airventure.

Dick Knapinski, EAA's director of communications, said the smoke is treated as any other weather event, with pilots making safe decisions as they feel appropriate.

So far, pilots are on hold, waiting to get into the airport as everyone involved keeps checking on the forecast, but the big arrival days aren't until this weekend.

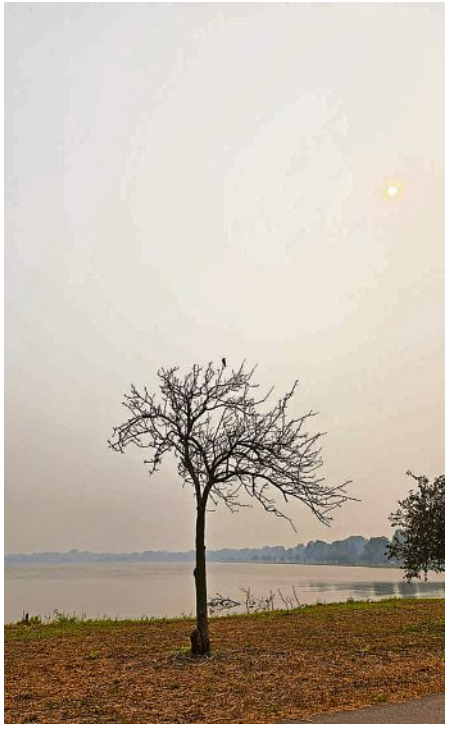
Here's what to know so far about air quality and weather as opening day nears.

When will the air quality improve?

A statewide air quality advisory was in place until noon July 17, though the National Weather Service warned it may extend the advisory for parts of the state.

As of 11:30 a.m. Thursday, air quality in Oshkosh was in the maroon "Hazardous" category on the Air Quality Index, though the quality is clearer closer to Lake Winnebago, according to the PurpleAir map Winnebago County Health shared on its Facebook page.

See AIR QUALITY, Page 2A



The sun is hiding behind haze from the Canada wildfire smoke, as seen near Lake Winnebago in Oshkosh on July 15. Area residents and EAA AirVenture guests may miss out on the smoke by Sunday.

Trump revisits election security claims

President alleges China role in 2020 elections

Phillip M. Bailey and Joey Garrison
USA TODAY

President Donald Trump in a July 16 prime-time address sought to further sow distrust in U.S. elections, claiming broad vulnerabilities with voting systems and potential for interference from other nations.

Trump specifically pointed to China, alleging it interfered with the electoral process in 2020.

"Every American deserves to know that when they cast their vote, that vote will be counted accurately in a system, and that is to make that system secure – one where cheating and interference are not just difficult, but virtually impossible," he said. "Unfortunately, the system we have today falls catastrophically short of that standard."

The president said newly declassified documents will show China tried to undermine the 2020 election in several ways, including compromising U.S. voter data. He also said Americans have for years been "blatantly lied to" by the government about the security of election infrastructure, such as voting machines and ballot-counting systems.

"They're vulnerable and they're easily compromised, and people within our government knew that," Trump said.

Yet most of the documents released by the White House did not support the president's sweeping assertions about "shocking vulnerabilities" in America's

See TRUMP, Page 2A

Ex-MPD officer sentenced for misuse of Flock system

Shane Colpoys
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

A former Milwaukee police officer will spend 12 months on probation and pay a $500 fine after pleading guilty to improperly using the department's Flock license plate reading system to track an ex-girlfriend and her partner.

Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Kristela L. Cervera handed down the sentence to Josue Ayala, 34, on July 15.

"I'm mortified when I read through the victim impact statement for how [Ayala's] actions affected them," Cervera said when she handed down the sentence.

Ayala's probation starts July 15. If he violates it at any point, he is subject to 180 days in the community reintegration center. Cervera also ordered Ayala to comply with mental health rehabilitation and to take any prescribed medication.

Judge Cervera followed Deputy District Attorney Matthew Torbenson's recommendation that the state issue a fine in exchange for Ayala's guilty plea and his resignation from the Milwaukee Police Department.

"Mr. Ayala was in a position of trust and that was shattered," Torbenson said. "He knew both victims and at one point in his life was close to them."

Ayala, speaking in front of the court in a navy suit, took accountability for his actions.

See SENTENCE, Page 2A

Subscriber-only eNewspaper

The eNewspaper is an electronic copy of your print newspaper. Enjoy every page by going to thenorthwestern.com/enewspaper or scan this code on your mobile device. You will also find late news and sports in the bonus sections. Check it out today!

Volume 159 | No. 168
Subscribe 877 424-5048
©2026 $2.50