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Playoff Push

North hosts Johnston in must-win game. SPORTS B1

Siouxland Big Give

Fifth annual fundraiser collects more than \$190,000. LOCAL A2

Oil prices

OPEC+ makes big oil cut to boost prices; pump costs may rise. WORLD A6



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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2022

siouxcityjournal.com

Tyson Foods to shutter offices

DAVE DREESZEN

DDREESZEN@SIOUXCITYJOURNAL.COM
DAKOTA DUNES — Metro Sioux City is losing about 500 white-collar jobs as a result of Tyson Foods' plan to close its offices in Dakota Dunes.

Tyson's fresh meats division is now based in a sprawling office complex that anchors the Two Rivers Business Park in Dakota Dunes, an upscale planned community in Southeast South Dakota. Tyson announced Wednesday that about 1,000 corporate staff in the Dunes and Chicago area will move to the meat company's world headquar-

ters in Springdale, Arkansas.

All of the approximately 500 employees in Dakota Dunes will be eligible for assistance to relocate to Northwest Arkansas, company spokesman Derek Burleson said. Those who chose to stay will be eligible for severance, with packages determined on an individual basis, he said.

The relocations, scheduled to be completed in phases, will begin in



McGowan



King

early 2023.

Wednesday's announcement surprised many community leaders, who immediately offered their support to the Tyson employees, who now must decide whether to move or stay in Siouxland.

"First and foremost, our thoughts are with every single person who is adversely affected



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

The main public entrance to the Tyson Fresh Meats offices in Dakota Dunes is shown Wednesday. Tyson announced Wednesday that it will relocate the approximate 500 corporate positions at Dakota Dunes to its world headquarters in Springdale, Arkansas.

Please see TYSON, Page A4

FIRE RISK AT HARVEST TIME



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

Fire damaged this combine and soybean field on Sept. 28 west of Anthon, Iowa. Worsening drought conditions are increasing the risk of field fires this harvest season.

Dry conditions raise fire risk

Firefighters have responded to many field fires

SIOUX CITY — It's not uncommon during this time of year to see a haze in the air, the dust from an ongoing harvest hanging over the land.

This year, there's a good chance you'll see smoke, too.

Since harvest began, firefighters throughout the region have responded almost daily



NICK HYTREK

to field fires, sparked by farm machinery and fueled by extremely dry grass and plant stubble. It's been dry much of the year, and after an abnormally dry September, farmers face the increased risk of fire added to the annual dash to get crops out of the field.

"Especially, as the season goes on and the crops get more

and more mature," said Dan Meyer, who grows corn and soybeans west of Rock Rapids, Iowa.

And, unless there's significant rainfall during the next few weeks, there's not much they can do about it. They'll keep a close eye on bearings and chains in combines and machinery, watching for overheating that



Napel



Glisan

can cause a spark that ignites a fire in the crop stubble. Many will keep a disc hooked up to a tractor nearby, ready to stir up the soil and contain fires that do occur.

"I just went 15 miles in my pickup. I think every farmer in the field had a tractor with a

Please see HYTREK, Page A4

COVID-19 transmission is low in Woodbury County

DOLLY A. BUTZ

DBUTZ@SIOUXCITYJOURNAL.COM
SIOUX CITY — The number of tests coming back positive for COVID-19 in Woodbury County has remained in the double digits for the second straight week.

The data, which was updated by the Iowa Department of Public Health on Tuesday, shows 80 positive tests, which is up slightly from 76 positive tests reported on Sept. 27, but down from 115 positive tests reported on Sept. 13.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's COVID Data Tracker rates Woodbury County's community transmission level as low. That level was calculated on Sept. 29 using data from Sept. 22 to 28.

When community transmission is low, the CDC recommends that individuals stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines

Please see COVID-19, Page A4



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL FILE

Vaccine preparer Joanie Rise fills a syringe with Pfizer vaccine during Woodbury County's first COVID-19 mass vaccination clinic on Feb. 10, 2021 at the Tyson Events Center.

THE MINI: Now that Edward Snowden is a citizen of Russia, will he be a great patriot and fight for Russia in Ukraine? —Richard Satter, Sioux City

Table with 2 columns: Category and Page Number. Includes Sports, Obituaries, Weather, Opinion, Business, Puzzles.



# Hurricane Ian closes some Florida schools indefinitely

CHEYANNE MUMPHREY AND  
BIANCA VÁZQUEZ TONESS  
Associated Press

The devastation from Hurricane Ian has left schools shuttered indefinitely in parts of Florida, leaving storm-weary families anxious for word on when and how children can get back to classrooms.

As rescue and recovery operations continue in the storm's aftermath, several school systems in hard-hit counties in southwestern Florida can't say for sure when they'll reopen. Some schools are without power and still assessing the damage, as well as the impact on staff members who may have lost homes or can't return to work.

Shuttered schools can worsen the hurricane's disruption for children. Recovery from natural disasters elsewhere suggests the effects on kids can be lasting, particularly in low-income communities that have a harder time bouncing back.

"In a week or two, we'll have forgotten about Hurricane Ian. But these districts and schools and students will be struggling months and years later," said Cassandra R. Davis, an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina.

In Florida, 68 of 75 school districts are open for in-person instruction, and two more districts are expected to reopen this week, the state Department of Education said Tuesday. Among those still closed is Sarasota, where nearly half of students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch, an



GERALD HERBERT, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Residents who rode out the storm arrive at a dock to evacuate by boat in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian on Sunday on Florida's Pine Island, in Lee County, Fla. The devastation from Hurricane Ian has left schools shuttered indefinitely in parts of Florida.

indicator of poverty.

Abbie Tarr Trembley, a mother of four in Sarasota, said her youngest, a 9-year-old boy, asks each morning when he can go back to school.

"Every morning he's like, 'Mom, is it a school day? Is it a school day?'" she said. "Every morning, I'm almost in tears."

The hurricane damaged the roof of her house, and the family lost power for three days. She was grateful to be spared worse. But she has begun to worry about the effects on her children and their education. Her son already repeated first grade to help him catch up from the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Online learning recently has been an option for schools dealing with disasters from the coronavirus pandemic to hurricanes, but researchers have said overreliance on remote education is not sustainable. Davis has studied how

Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Florence in 2018 impacted student learning in the southeastern U.S. She said research shows elementary students continued to fall behind academically, as much as two years after a storm. But districts where parents are affluent and school budgets are healthy tend to recover more quickly.

Sarasota County school officials say they hope to reopen schools for some of their 45,000 students on Monday. School leaders are aiming to reopen buildings in the northern part of the county, which suffered less damage compared to the schools in the south.

In the meantime, students can use online resources if they have access to the internet, Sarasota school officials said at a news conference. Florida's education department did not respond to questions about its guidance to local school

systems for addressing the missed school days.

Sarasota workers are ripping out and replacing carpets and drywall where water breached school buildings and discarding spoiled cafeteria food that went unrefrigerated in the days without electricity. For now, school officials said, standing water makes some streets unsafe for students and families to navigate. School leaders are also assessing which teachers and other staff won't be able to return to work when schools reopen.

Two schools in the county have served as shelters for displaced residents and will close on Friday to give workers time to clean them before reopening Monday.

Schools in the southern part of the county will take "at least another week to reopen," Superintendent Brennan Asplen told reporters Tuesday.

Trembley has heard rumors that when schools do start back up, it will be online. She hopes that is not the case. "There's no way that I can assist a 9-year-old with schoolwork and continue my job," said Trembley, who works at a general contractor's office.

After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, some students faced displacement for a long time, up to five to six months until they were resettled, according to a study. There was a drop in test scores in that first year. "Not only do they have to move their home, but they're even out of school for some time," explained Bruce Sacerdote, an economist at Dartmouth College.

# Ukraine aims to restart two occupied reactors

ADAM SCHRECK AND  
HANNA ARHIROVA  
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine is considering restarting Europe's largest nuclear plant to ensure its safety just weeks after fears of a radiation disaster at the Russian-occupied facility, the president of the company that operates the plant said.

The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has emerged as one of the most worrying flashpoints of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It has been damaged in fighting, prompting international alarm, and its head was detained by occupying forces through the weekend before his release Monday.

Ukrainian state nuclear company Energoatom shut down the last of the plant's six reactors on Sept. 11 because Russian military activity had cut reliable external power supplies for cooling and other safety systems, threatening a potentially catastrophic meltdown.

But now the company

faces a different problem.

In an interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday, Energoatom President Petro Kotin said the company could restart two of the reactors in a matter of days to protect safety installations as winter approaches and temperatures drop.

"If you have low temperature, you will just freeze everything inside. The safety equipment will be damaged," he said in his office at the company's Kyiv headquarters. "So you need heating and the only heating is going to come from the working reactor."

The plant's last operational reactor was placed into what is known as "cold shutdown" last month, reducing the likelihood of a dangerous meltdown.

But there is still a risk as long as there are nuclear fuel assemblies inside, Kotin explained. Intentional damage to the reactors or the safety and cooling equipment, or a failure of those systems due to cold temperatures, could lead to disaster.

## COVID-19

From A1

and get tested if they have symptoms. Wearing a mask

is advised on public transportation and when a person has symptoms, tests positive for the virus, or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19.



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

A farmer combines soybeans in a field northeast of Climbing Hill, Iowa, on Sept. 29. Despite an ongoing drought and risk of grass fires, producers are reporting average to above-average soybean yields in some areas of Siouxland.

## Tyson

From A1

by today's announcement." Siouxland Chamber of Commerce President Chris McGowan said in a statement.

"We were surprised and saddened by today's news and want to reassure our community that the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce will do everything in our power to mitigate the negative impact on our tri-state region, while working tirelessly to assist those who have been affected and want to find employment locally so that they and their families may remain in Siouxland."

The sprawling Tyson complex in Dakota Dunes was built in 1997 as the world headquarters for IBP Inc., which moved from Dakota City to Dakota Dunes. Just four years later, IBP was acquired by Tyson in October 2001 for \$3.2 billion in cash and stock, creating the world's largest processor and marketer of chicken, beef and pork.

Tyson will continue to operate its flagship Dakota City beef plant, which employs about 4,500 people, and its cold storage facility in Sioux City. The public-



TIM HYNDS, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

A portion of Tyson Foods' corporate campus in Dakota Dunes is shown Wednesday.

ly-traded company is by far the metro area's largest employer.

Tyson said no layoffs are expected as a result of consolidating its corporate offices. The company said the move will "foster closer collaboration, enhance team member agility and enable faster decision making, positioning Tyson to win with its team members, customers, and consumers."

"Bringing our talented corporate team members and businesses together under one roof unlocks greater opportunities to share perspectives and ideas, while also enabling us to act quickly to solve problems and provide the innovative product solutions that our customers deserve and value," Tyson President and CEO Donnie

King said in a statement.

Tyson also announced Wednesday it will expand and remodel its corporate offices in Springdale to help prepare for the arrival of the relocated workers.

Metro Sioux City has seen a number of corporate departures in recent decades. In 1998, Gateway, a Fortune 500 computer maker, moved its headquarters from North Sioux City to the San Diego area. In the aftermath of the Tyson deal in 2001, hundreds of former IBP executives relocated to Springdale.

After Gateway left, a large number of executives who moved to California sold their homes in Dakota Dunes, triggering a housing market downturn that lasted about 18 months, recalled Jeff Dooley, manager of the Dakota Dunes

Community Improvement District.

The simultaneous departure of hundreds of Tyson employees could have a similar impact on the metro area housing market, which already faces rising mortgage interest rates after years of robust sales driven by historically-low rates and a short supply of homes listed.

Dooley noted unemployment in the metro area is lower and the local economy is more diversified today than it was at the time of the Gateway and IBP corporate relocations.

"Siouxland has a lot of companies that could use their services," he said of the Tyson employees who want to stay in the region.

Tyson did not immediately respond to a Journal reporter's question Wednesday about what will happen to the corporate complex in Dakota Dunes. At the time IBP opened it, thousands of employees were based there. But as more and more jobs were transferred to Arkansas, Tyson began leasing space to other employers. The tenants included the direct sales division of Vizio, a leading maker of televisions and other electronics.

## Hytrek

From A1

disc hooked up to it," said Dave Van Holland, chief of Sioux Center's fire department, which in the last two weeks has responded to three field fires, all caused by a bearing going out in farm machinery.

Not included is the number of fires those well-prepared farmers have extinguished with their discs before firefighters arrived, Van Holland said.

"I think everyone is still just moving forward with harvest and using best practices to reduce risk," said Leah Ten Napel, a field agronomist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Le Mars, Iowa. "We all just need to be very careful with the conditions we're in."

Farmers can't afford to wait for rain to reduce those risks. The warm, dry conditions that have dominated past weeks are sucking moisture from crops, and they need to be harvested now before they suffer damage from becoming too dry in the field.

How dry has it been this year? Sioux City had 12.30 inches of precipitation through Sept. 30, the driest nine-month start to a year on record, breaking the previous record of 13.54 inches in 1955. Sioux City currently stands 13 inches below normal for the year after a September that saw just .76 inches of rain, most of it scattered in small amounts throughout the month. Until a few showers sprinkled Sioux City late Tuesday and early Wednesday, Sioux City hadn't seen rain since .03 of an inch fell on Sept. 23.

National Weather Service stations in Sioux Center and Spencer also recorded less than an inch of rain in September, and Sioux Center is drier than Sioux City, with just 11.39 inches of precipitation to date.

If you go back the past two and a half years, Northwest Iowa is 15-25 inches below average, said Justin Glisan, Iowa's state climatologist.

Conditions don't look to improve much in the near future. Glisan said the remainder of October's expected to be warmer and drier than normal. The rest of the year? It's a coin toss between average, below or above normal.

The U.S. Drought Monitor's Sept. 29 map puts all of Siouxland in at least abnormally dry conditions. The drought's severity ranges across four stages from moderate to exceptional, the most extreme.

That range in conditions is showing up in crop yields. Farmers living in areas that received rainfall at opportune times this summer obviously are seeing better yields than those who didn't. Meyer said his ground in Lyon County fared better than other areas of Siouxland, and his beans are hitting 63-73 bushels per acre and corn at 200-230 bushels.

"We're in better shape here than you in Sioux City," he said.

Ten Napel said bean yields in her nine-county area are ranging from 25-72 bushels per acre. Corn is even wider, with some fields a total loss, others yielding 200 bushels an acre. The average is about 172 bushels, a mark below normal.

It's too late now for rain to help this year's crop, and large rainfalls would delay harvest. But given the chance to have a good soaker help replenish the dry subsoil conditions, most farmers wouldn't be upset, Meyer said.

"On a year this dry, I think most farmers would welcome a two- or three-day rain delay. Or a week delay," he said.

It would sure beat a delay caused by fighting fire in the field.

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