



CANADA IS STILL BURNING

Smoke continues to pour south from Canada into the US, prompting continued low air-quality reports from the US Environmental Protection Agency. Page A6

TODAY'S MUST-READS

CHICOPEE A 'perfect storm' of HR problems

An error that left the city paying health and dental benefits for employees and retirees who died or resigned has cost the city an estimated \$150,000 a year or less and was caused by a "perfect storm" of problems in several departments. Mayor John L. Vieau joined with the city's insurance brokers, the new chief officer of human resources and the benefits specialist to reveal results of a study examining how benefits continued to be paid for employees, retirees and their dependents after they were no longer eligible for them. Full story on Page A5

SPRINGFIELD

Mercy nurses picket over staffing, program closures

Massachusetts Nurses Association members Dee Doyle, Andrea Fox and Anne-Marie Paquette at an informational picket on Monday. (JIM KINNEY / THE REPUBLICAN)



With too few staff, patients can't be moved out of the ER and care suffers, union says

BY JIM KINNEY
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The nurses outside Mercy Medical Center said the hospital recently told them about 10,000 people have left its emergency room in Springfield in the last year without treatment. "When I first started, 10 years ago, one

or two people walking away a day was a disaster," said Anne Marie Paquette, who works as a registered nurse in the emergency department and is a union representative with the Massachusetts Nurses Association.

But now, with too few nurses at Mercy Medical Center, the nurses say patients are backing up in the emergency department, leading to long wait times.

In frustration, people leave without getting treatment. SEE PICKET, PAGE A2

NORTHAMPTON Somali group's crops hit hard

Derow Abdullahi helped create the New Community Farming Cooperative, which was formed in 2017, to allow Somalian refugees to farm crops which might be difficult to buy elsewhere in the state. This year, however, the farm has lost almost all of its crops due to flooding, according to Abdullahi, a Springfield resident. Full story on Page A5

STATE Right to repair what again?

If you're having trouble following the status of Massachusetts right-to-repair law, you're not alone. In 2020, three out of four ballot voters wanted the Bay State's right-to-repair law to be updated to give car owners and independent repair facilities access to a broader range of car diagnostics and repair information — the so-called "telematics," which were not widely in use when the original law was instituted in 2013. Full story on Page A9

WEATHER

Showers and storms. High: 85°; Low: 67° EXPANDED WEATHER, A7

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EXTREME WEATHER Out of the frying pan ...

Above, heat ripples engulf two women while crossing the street yesterday in downtown Phoenix, where it hit 115 degrees. Below, fire crews in Prado, California, take a break from the 105-degree heat while putting out hotspots Sunday at the Rabbit fire in Beaumont, California. On Page A7, read about how heat waves in the U.S. and Europe are showing no signs of relenting in the immediate future. (MATT YORK / ASSOCIATED PRESS AND GINA FERAZZI / LOS ANGELES TIMES)



STATEHOUSE

Mass. lawmakers cautioned about biases within AI systems

BY SAM DRYSDALE
State House News Service
Technology's new frontiers present unique regulatory challenges for government systems that often lag behind the rates of change in fast-developing tech sectors. But some in the Legislature are trying to help orchestrate a response. Several bills before the Joint Committee on Advanced Information Technology, the Internet and Cybersecurity seek to get the ball rolling, as artificial intelligence (AI) becomes more advanced everyday.



Humanoid robot Ameca is pictured during the ITU's AI for Good Summit in Geneva, Switzerland, on July 5. (MARTIAL TREZZINI / KEYSTONE VIA AP)

Nothing to show after 20 years?

Advocates urge Mass. AG to issue report on clergy sexual abuse

BY NANCY EVE COHEN
New England Public Media

Twenty years ago this month, the then-attorney general of Massachusetts, Thomas F. Reilly, issued a report on an investigation of child sexual abuse at the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston.

"[T]he Office of the Attorney General initiated an extensive investigation, which involved prosecutors, State Police, civilian investigators, and the Grand Jury," the report read. "[I]t is essential to create an official public record of what occurred so that this type of widespread abuse of children might never happen again here or elsewhere."

In the two decades since, the state's top prosecutor has not published a report on clergy abuse at the three other dioceses in Massachusetts — Springfield, Fall River or Worcester.

But several survivors and advocates said they were interviewed for a report on those dioceses by the attorney general's office nearly two years ago, when it was headed up by Maura Healey, in the fall of 2021.

They're still waiting for the report.

'You don't want to disappoint God'

Skip Shea, 63, recently walked inside the kitchen of a large house — more like a mansion — in the Worcester County town of Whitinsville. When he was 14, in the summer of 1974, he mowed the lawn here.

At the time, this property was known as the House of Affirmation, a treatment center for priests run by the Worcester Diocese. SEE ABUSE, PAGE A2