

Omaha Lake Filling After Mussels Eradicated

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has started to refill a southwest Omaha lake that was drained to eradicate an invasive species of mussels.

The corps announced tests showed no signs of zebra mussels or their larvae at Lake Zorinsky. The 255-acre public lake was drawn down in December to allow cold temperatures to freeze and kill the mussels, which can clog drains and pipes, freeze up cooling systems, kill off native species and render power boats inoperable.

The gates that keep water in the lake were closed Wednesday. The corps says it could take three to 15 months to fill the lake, depending on rainfall.

Nebraska Game and Parks says it will begin restocking the lake this fall and will continue next spring.

Johnson Asks FEMA To Extend Claims Deadline

SIoux FALLS (AP) — South Dakota Senator Tim Johnson has asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency to extend the amount of time homeowners in South Dakota can file claims relating to flooding.

The National Flood Insurance Program normally has a 60-day window for policy holders to file proof-of-loss claims.

In a letter to FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, the democratic senator says that while he believes the 60-day timetable would normally be sufficient, he worries the prolonged flooding will make it difficult for families to gather all the necessary information to file claims.

Johnson, the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, says many homes remain underwater. He says the extension is necessary because the water must recede before people can get repair estimates.

Neb. Gov. Requests Major Disaster Declaration

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Gov. Dave Heineman is seeking a major disaster declaration for 29 Nebraska counties hit by flooding, tornadoes and severe storms.

The request submitted Wednesday will be reviewed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency before being forwarded to the president.

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency puts its preliminary estimate of damage to public infrastructure at more than \$14 million. That figure is expected to grow as flooding continues.

Heineman's request seeks disaster assistance for state and local governments in 27 counties and individual assistance for 11 counties for damage incurred since May 1. Some counties are on both lists. It also seeks hazard mitigation for the entire state.

President Barack Obama previously issued an emergency disaster declaration for 18 Nebraska counties impacted by flooding along the Missouri and Platte rivers.

Homeland Security Sec. Visits Flooded ND City

MINOT, N.D. (AP) — The Cabinet secretary responsible for the Federal Emergency Management Agency is telling residents in the flooded North Dakota city of Minot that the federal government will do everything it can to help.

But Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano also is cautioning North Dakota residents to be better prepared for future flooding.

Napolitano took a helicopter tour Wednesday over the city where 4,100 homes have been damaged by Souris River floodwaters and more than 11,000 people have had to temporarily leave. She says the federal government is "here for the duration" but that it is "not a panacea."

She says residents of flood-prone areas should get flood insurance if they don't already have it to guard against future floods. Only 375 homes in Minot were insured.

MillerCoors A Casualty Of Minn. Shutdown

BY STEVE KARNOWSKI
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Miller, Coors and other popular beers may disappear from Minnesota stores and bars within days because brewing giant MillerCoors lacks the proper licenses due to the state's government shutdown.

MillerCoors has 39 "brand label registrations" with the state that expired last month, and the employees who process renewals were laid off when state government shut down July 1 in a budget dispute, Doug Neville, a spokesman for the Department of Public Safety, said Wednesday.

State alcohol enforcement officials who remain on the job recently told officials with Chicago-based MillerCoors LLC that they need to come up with a plan soon for pulling their products he said.

"I think we're looking at days instead of weeks before some action needs to be taken but I don't have an exact date," Neville said.

MillerCoors spokesman Julian Green said the brewer still hopes to resolve the dispute through discussions with state alcohol regulators, but didn't rule out legal action.

"With 39 brands at stake in one of our largest markets in the country, during one of the highest selling periods in the summer, we don't take our business of ensuring proper state licenses lightly,"

Green said. "Especially when it impacts the livelihoods of our distributors and retailers, and ultimately impacts our consumers who can't buy our brands."

The affected brands include not only the Miller and Coors lines, but a long list of regional and craft beers such as George Killian's and Blue Moon and imports such as Pilsner Urquell and Molson.

Leinenkugel beers aren't in danger because their licenses are good through 2012, MillerCoors spokesman Tom Ryan said.

The same problem might affect other brewers as well as wineries and distillers at some point, Neville said. And it comes as hundreds of bars, restaurants and liquor stores across the state are running afoul of a similar renewal requirement that's starting to leave them unable to replenish their supplies as the hottest part of the year approaches.

Minnesota requires that brewers, wineries and distillers take out brand label registrations for products they sell in the state. They cost only \$30 and are good for three years. MillerCoors' registrations expired June 13.

Green said MillerCoors submitted its paperwork and the check on time, on the 13th. Neville said the state didn't receive them until June 15, two days after the registrations expired.

Whether it was the 13th or 15th might not have mattered because

the check was for \$1,380, a \$210 overpayment, Green said. That delayed the process. The state received a second check for the right amount on June 27, he said.

But by that time, Neville said, employees in the department's alcohol enforcement division didn't have time to process the renewals before they were laid off. On top of that, he said, the computer database they use to process renewals was taken offline along with some other systems so the department's skeleton IT crew can concentrate on maintaining more critical systems relied upon by law enforcement agencies.

Companies with shutdown disputes can turn to the state courts, which have set up a process for handling pleas for help overseen by Ramsey County Chief Judge Kathleen Gearin and an appointed special master, former state Supreme Court Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz.

That's what many retailers have already done. They're required to have \$20 "buyer's cards" to purchase liquor from wholesalers, and they must be renewed annually by the same laid-off employees that process brand registrations. Hundreds of those cards have expired or will soon. So retailers went before Blatz on Tuesday to ask for an order to recall some employees to process renewals. A decision is pending.

Green said MillerCoors wants to

reach a solution through discussions short of legal action.

"For now we're still selling beer in the state, but we hope we can bring this issue to a resolution because there are a number of Minnesota businesses at stake. In this environment we don't want to see these businesses negatively impacted."

It's not clear if discussions could solve the problem, however. Neville said alcohol control officials determined they couldn't just look the other way and let MillerCoors do business as usual.

"Our enforcement agents looked carefully at the statute and there nothing in there that lets us make any special arrangements with anybody," Neville said.

Neville didn't know which other producers besides MillerCoors, the country's No. 2 brewer, might be affected, but said St. Louis, Mo.-based Anheuser-Busch Cos. Inc., the largest U.S. beer maker, is safe at least until Oct. 1. "Our agents, I know, are looking at other brands," he said.

The potential loss of popular MillerCoors beers comes as another blow to liquor store, restaurant and bar owners who were thinking things couldn't get any worse, said Frank Ball, executive director of the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association.

"It could be 102 degrees this weekend," Ball said. "We need cold beer."

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S.D. State Workers Lose Right To Appeal

PIERRE (AP) — A legislative panel has decided that South Dakota state employees who are laid off will no longer have the right to appeal.

The Legislature's Rules Review Committee voted 3-2 Tuesday to approve a rule passed earlier by the state Career Services Commission, a board of governor-appointed citizens.

The changes, which take effect Aug. 1, affect state employees who fall under the civil service rules, or about half the state's work force of 12,800.

"There seems to be an outright attack on public employees everywhere," said Mark Anderson, president of the South Dakota Federation of Labor.

Bureau of Personnel officials who drafted the rule change said it's needed to avoid having a judge overrule the agency or the Legislature. For example, the old rule meant that if lawmakers voted to cut financial support for a program and an employee was laid off as a result, a judge or the Career Services Commission could overrule the layoff, they said.

Sen. Jean Hunhoff, R-Yankton, who voted for the rule change, said employees in the private sector do not get to appeal layoffs. State employees are at least given a justification, she said.

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, July 15th

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| <p>4:00-6:00 p.m. Team Registration & Check-in</p> <p>4:30-5:45 p.m. Survivor Registration & Check-in</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Survivor Reception & Meal</p> <p>5:45 p.m. Survivor Photo</p> <p>5:00-7:00 p.m. Community Dinner</p> <p>5:00-9:00 p.m. Luminaria's Available</p> <p>5:00-9:30 p.m. Relay Store Open</p> <p>6:00 p.m. OPENING CEREMONIES/SURVIVOR'S LAP</p> <p>6:00-10:00 p.m. Silent Auction</p> <p>7:00 p.m. Honorary Survivor Chair/Drawing</p> <p>7:15 p.m. Entertainment/Academy of Dance</p> <p>8:00 p.m. Team Introductions</p> <p>9:30 p.m. (dusk) Luminaria Ceremony</p> <p>10:00 p.m. Community Raffle Drawings/Silent Auction Ends</p> <p>11:30-4:00 a.m. Big Kahuna Games & Overnight Entertainment</p> | <p>Community Breakfast Saturday Morning • 5:00AM Sponsored by: McDonald's Juice & Various Breakfast Sandwiches Free Will Donation</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ALL MEALS!</i></p> |
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Saturday, July 16th

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| <p>5:00 a.m.-6:30 a.m. Community Breakfast sponsored by McDonald's</p> <p>5:30 a.m. Closing Ceremony/Fight Back Ceremony & Awards</p> <p>6:00 a.m. Last Lap led by Survivors</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">RELAY FOR LIFE American Cancer Society</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>All proceeds are donated to American Cancer Society's Relay For Life - Yankton Unit.</i></p> |
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Upload and share your photos of the flood.

Photos will be highlighted on Yankton.net, Spotted.yankton.net and may be printed in the newspaper.

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