

S.D. Capital City Counts Flood Costs

PIERRE (AP) — Officials in Pierre estimate \$13.2 million in costs and damage from the rising Missouri River.
City Administrator Leon Schochenmaier says many of the costs are only estimates because much of the damaged property is still underwater.
KCCR radio reported that estimated repair costs so far include \$2 million for storm sewers, \$1.5 million for streets, and \$1.2 million for the electrical system.
Across the river, Fort Pierre officials are estimating at least \$5.1 million in costs to the city.

Omaha Works To Relieve Swollen Sewer System

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Omaha is using giant pumps to relieve its swollen storm water and sewer system after days of rain and flooding along the Missouri River.
KETV-TV in Omaha says Wednesday the pumps are in place in the downtown area. The flood-control operation also includes a drainage channel and an excavation area. The pumps are set up next to a pump station. Water is pulled out of the system then shot into the drainage channel, where the water flows back to the river.
The city says it will have an estimate on how much it has spent on flood control by Friday. The mayor's office says it's likely to be around \$3 million.

Omaha Financial Adviser To Challenge Terry

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A Republican financial analyst and former University of Nebraska football player says he will challenge U.S. Rep. Lee Terry in the 2012 primary election.
On Wednesday, Brett Lindstrom of Omaha announced his candidacy for Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District.
Lindstrom cites what he calls a "lack of political courage to meaningfully address the very real problems our nation faces" for his decision to challenge Terry, a seven-term incumbent.
His campaign website, which went online Tuesday night, rips Terry's office for being "unable to express his official statement" on how to fix Social Security. The program's trust funds are projected to be drained in 2036.
The 30-year-old Lindstrom was born in Lincoln and raised in Omaha. He was a walk-on, backup quarterback for the Huskers from 1999-2003.

Missouri River Erodes Bank, Claims N.D. Home

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Officials in North Dakota's Burleigh County say the flooding Missouri River has claimed its first home through bank erosion.
The home in the Hoge Island area north of Bismarck was guarded by rock riprap. County Water Resource District Engineer Michael Gunsch says a hole developed between two segments and water eroded the bank and undermined the home's foundation. It was leaning to one side on Wednesday. The residents had evacuated earlier.

U.S. Railroads Defend Business Practices

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Union Pacific and the nation's other major freight railroads are defending their business and pricing practices at a Washington D.C. hearing.
The Surface Transportation Board began a two-day hearing on railroad competition Wednesday to consider whether new regulations are needed.
UP CEO Jim Young planned to tell the board that if new regulations are imposed on railroads, the industry will reduce its spending on track and equipment that helps fuel the economy. And jobs will be cut.

Small River Brings Historic Floods To N.D.

BY DAVE KOLPACK
Associated Press

MINOT, N.D. — Plastic sheeting hung over the apartment building like a shroud, stretching from the eaves to the ground. Across it, someone had spray-painted the word "pray" and drawn a line labeled "1969" — the level where floodwaters had risen the last time the Souris River climbed out of its banks in Minot.
That line stood just 2 feet above the ground. But the water is expected to climb far higher in parts of this Air Force town over the coming days as the little-known waterway swells from rain and snowmelt. It could bring the region's worst flooding in four decades.
As many as 10,000 people raced to evacuate Wednesday as water began spilling over Minot's levees. The river, which begins in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan and flows for a short distance through North Dakota, was all but certain to inundate thousands of homes and businesses during the next week.
A quarter of the city's 41,000 residents had been facing a 6 p.m. evacuation order, but emergency sirens blared at 1 p.m., warning people that the deadline had been moved up by five full hours. Before making their escape, city crews sandbagged critical structures such as the water-treatment plant, city hall and school buildings.

"I feel so bad for everybody," said Robyn Whitlow, who lives outside the evacuation zone but was helping people load their belongings. She burst into tears when the siren went off.
The deluge along the Souris was expected to easily exceed a 1969 flood, possibly reaching 13.5 feet above flood stage by Monday. The river is expected to top the historical record set in 1881 by more than 5 feet.
Nearby, Steve and Michelle Benjamin were hard at work hauling an entertainment center, desk chairs and bicycles over an emergency levee to a trailered pickup truck. It was the last of nearly a dozen loads.
Michelle Benjamin, 46, stood on the deck along the river, watching water trickle over the dike.
"Oh my God," she said as she fought back tears. "It's not easy starting over at this age."
The couple, who have lived in a landscaped five-bedroom modular home for 16 years, had moved their belongings out of the river's path twice in less than a month. Some 10,000 residents evacuated before the river hit 5 feet above flood stage. They were allowed to return but were warned to be ready to leave again quickly.
The repeated moves were particularly taxing for Steve Benjamin, 51, who broke his back in 1984 and has had several surgeries,

evidenced by a 20-inch scar spanning much of his bare back. The last item waiting to be loaded — other than their dogs Buster and Bear — was a water bed.
Benjamin said the couple was likely heading to his son's house, which was in Minot but on higher ground outside the evacuation zone.
"I don't think the reality will set in until tomorrow, when we see the water in the house," he said.
Minot Mayor Curt Zimbelman warned that the river would top the levees earlier than expected and urged residents still moving their belongings to "be prepared to move quickly."
The National Weather Service in Bismarck also issued a flash-flood warning along the river from Burlington through Minot and Logan to Sawyer.
Further north near the Canadian border, the river rose nearly 4 feet in the Sherwood area, where water released from Canadian dams arrives in North Dakota.
Minot, the fourth-largest city in North Dakota, is less than 60 miles south of the Canadian border. It was founded in the late 1800s during construction of the Great Northern Railroad. The economy relies extensively on agriculture, as well as Minot Air Force Base and the recent oil boom in the western part of the state.
Nearly 500 National Guard soldiers were in town to help with traffic control and the evacuation.

Bond Set For Two Charged In Sioux Falls Slaying

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Two people charged in the beating death of a Sioux Falls man who was a refugee from the African nation of Sudan have had their bond set at \$500,000 cash.
The *Argus Leader* reported that 21-year-old Jerome Douglas Ewing and 17-year-old Dwight Dauson Ree made initial court appearances Tuesday on alternate counts of first-degree murder, second-degree murder and manslaughter. Ree is being charged as an adult.
Twenty-year-old Geu Ayuel was found beaten to death Friday morning in an alley behind an apartment in Sioux Falls. Court documents allege that Ewing and Ree hit Ayuel with their fists, feet and rocks after the three had been drinking at a house nearby and left to buy cigarettes.
Court documents say that Ree and Ewing were walking behind

Ayuel at about 1:30 a.m. Friday when they began to beat him, apparently because they were "tired of (him) running his mouth."
Ayuel's body was found by neighbors the next day.
Ayuel's mother, Akuach Atem Ayuel, said she left Sudan for the United States in 1995 and returned in 2007 to bring her children to

live with her in Kansas City. Ayuel recently came to Sioux Falls.
Prosecutor Tom Hensley declined to discuss the decision to charge Ree as an adult. In general, South Dakota law dictates that a juvenile charged in adult court must be 16 or older and the charge must be an upper-level felony, according to *The Argus Leader*.

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Chamberlain Threatened By Missouri River flooding

CHAMBERLAIN (AP) — Parts of the South Dakota city of Chamberlain are being threatened by the rising Missouri River.
Water overtopped a temporary levee on Monday night and flooded part of a campground. Manager Rob Brown tells *The Daily Republic* newspaper that officials anticipated it might happen and had already moved campers out of the area.
He says more campers will be moved out in coming days as the waters continue to rise. Sandbagging also is being done around a few Chamberlain homes, a sewer lift station and a restaurant. KELO-TV reports that boats have moved out of a local marina.
Jody Farhat with the Army Corps of Engineers says recent rainfall and increased releases from Big Bend Dam are the reasons for the higher water levels in the area.

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