Trooper Undergoes Successful Surgery

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SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Authorities say a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper injured after a police chase in Sioux Falls underwent successful surgery early Thursday morning to relieve pressure on his brain.

Trooper Andrew Steen was injured after he was run over by a suspect early Wednesday.

Highway Patrol Superintendent Col. Craig Price says the 34-year-old trooper remains in critical condition.

Authorities say the 25-yearold female suspect suffered gunshot wounds and was hospitalized after being arrested.

Small Earthquake Rattles Western Neb.

HYANNIS, Neb. (AP) — An earthquake has rattled western Nebraska, but local officials aren't reporting any injuries or property damage. The U.S. Geological Survey

The U.S. Geological Survey says a magnitude 3.6 earthquake happened at 11:21 p.m. Wednesday. It was centered about 18 miles northwest of Hyannis.

Grant County Sheriff Shawn Hebbert told *The Omaha-World Herald* that some people felt the quake, saying it woke them up. The sheriff says he didn't feel a thing.

There were two small earthquakes in Nebraska in November 2011. Both hit an area between Chadron and Crawford and Hot Springs, S.D. The first was a 3.7 magnitude. The second was two days later and had a magnitude of 3.3.

Both were felt by residents, but neither caused damaged.

2 Get More Time To Respond To Lawsuit

NORTH SIOUX CITY (AP) — A South Dakota judge has given two men more time to respond to a \$1 billion defamation lawsuit over a meat product that critics dubbed "pink slime."

Judge Steven Jensen granted a 30-day extension for Carl Custer and Gerald Zirnstein to respond to the lawsuit brought by Beef Products Inc.

Custer, a former federal food scientist, and Zirnstein, the USDA microbiologist who named the product "pink slime," must now respond to the suit by Nov. 19.

BPI sued the two men as well as ABC News for \$1.2 billion in damages for roughly 200 statements about the product

that aired on ABC News. BPI attorney Dan Webb says

red Nebraska Wildfires Rage In Seven Counties BY GRANT SCHULTE conditions," said Al Berndt, assistant direc-

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Crews toiled through stiff winds and drought conditions Thursday to contain wildfires in seven Nebraska counties.

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency said the fires that began on Wednesday scorched an additional 58,000 acres in Nebraska, bringing the total acreage burned this year to about 300,000 acres — an area nearly the size of Los Angeles.

Most of the fires were contained or nearly contained by Thursday afternoon, but strong winds were complicating some of the firefighting efforts. Fires were reported in Cherry, Holt, Knox, Boone, Merrick, Nance and Fillmore Counties.

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency asked farmers to curtail their haying and harvesting until at least Friday, when the winds were expected to subside. But in a follow-up statement, officials said they will not impose fines on those who choose to continue.

"There is potential for any spark to become a flame with these high winds and dry conditions," said Al Berndt, assistant director of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. "We have activated our fire watch and hope we don't see more situations like we saw yesterday. This will be a persistent problem until we get some moisture on the ground. We really could use some snow."

The roughly 70 residents of the tiny northern Nebraska town of Crookston were allowed to return home late Wednesday after a fast-moving wildfire threatened the area, said Valentine Fire Chief Terry Engles. On Thursday, crews were still battling fierce winds as they worked to control the blaze, which had moved southeast.

That fire started in South Dakota Wednesday afternoon, then crossed into Nebraska north of the town of Kilgore and moved on to the east and west sides of Crookston. It blackened about 75 square miles.

Engles said 50 to 60 firefighters have beaten down the flames around a fire line, but they keep reigniting. The National Weather Service issued a high wind warning for the region, saying gusts could reach 70 mph on Thursday.

"It keeps trying to get away from us," Engles said.

Neb. Wind Power Potential Lauded

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska is trailing its neighbors in wind-energy development and missing an opportunity to add jobs to the state economy while producing a cleaner form of energy, according to a report released Thursday.

A group of lawmakers and environmental advocates unveiled the report as they argued that Nebraska is well-positioned to tap wind as a renewable energy resource.

Nebraska ranks as the fourthbest wind-producing state in the nation but 25th in the amount it could produce with the equipment currently has installed, according to the report commissioned on behalf of the Nebraska Sierra Club. Nebraska lags behind its neighboring states: Iowa, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado and Kansas.

Lawmakers and environmental advocates said they planned to pitch wind-energy to local public power districts that regulate energy usage throughout the state. The Nebraska Sierra Club is also preparing a series of clean-energy radio ads that will air during University of Nebraska football games, said Ken Winston, the group's policy advocate. "We have enormous potential,

but we're not using that potential,"

said state Sen. Ken Haar, of Malcolm. "Investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency will ultimately lower costs for Nebraskans."

Haar said Nebraska's reliance on coal is pumping money into Wyoming through an excise tax that helps offset the cost of property taxes in that state. The report was released two

The report was released two days after the dedication of a new wind farm near Broken Bow. The \$145 million project is expected to generate \$540,000 a year in lease royalties for landowners over its 25year lifespan.

The fire in rural Cherry County was the largest of at the blazes that broke out in Nebraska, which has endured a series of wildfires in this summer's extreme heat and drought. No one has reported injuries from any of the fires, according to the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. Engles said a few outbuildings were damaged.

A wildfire in southeast Nebraska's Fillmore County destroyed two abandoned homes and seven outbuildings, said Sutton assistant fire chief John Schurman. It also destroyed an estimated 170 hay bales and 100 irrigation-pivot tires.

Schurman said firefighters were called around 3 p.m. on Wednesday, and had the blaze contained by about 7 p.m. Crews remained on-scene through the night and into Thursday morning to prevent any flare-ups. Two families were evacuated Wednesday, but were allowed to return home later that evening. Investigators had not yet pinpointed a cause.

"With everything being so dry, this fire moved a lot faster than normal ones," Schurman said. "Usually, they'll get to a wet spot — a ditch, a place where the grass is green — and the flames will kind of die out. But this one ran. It ran way faster than any l've ever seen."

To the north, firefighters in Holt County have contained a fire that burned an estimated 500 to 600 acres of grassland, and destroyed a few small outbuildings. Two homes were evacuated, and the fire came within 5 feet of one house, but firefighters managed to save it.

The fire started about three miles west of Stewart and was stopped about one-and-aquarter miles from the town, said Holt County Emergency Manager Deb Hilker. The cause was unknown as of Thursday morning.

Hilker said county crews on Thursday were planning to bulldoze a 1-mile-long stretch of trees where flames were still smoldering.

"It's just too hard for them to try to contain it in those trees when the wind is blowing this hard," she said. "You can't really get up to the hot spots at the top of the trees until you knock them to the ground."

Report: McGovern Near Death

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Former U.S. Sen. George Mc-Govern is nearing the end of his life, surrounded by family members bracing for his death. Family spokesman Steve Hildebrand tells The As-

sociated Press that 90-year-old McGovern is peaceful and resting. He has been in hospice care since Monday. His family announced that he was no longer responsive Wednesday.

Hildebrand says his condition hasn't changed, and McGovern is "at the end stages of his life."

McGovern was the Democratic presidential candidate who lost to President Richard Nixon in 1972 in a historic landslide. He was a member of the U.S. House from 1957 to

1961 and a U.S. senator from 1963 to 1981. In recent years, he turned his focus to world hunger.

McGovern and his late wife Eleanor previously lived part-time in Stevensville, Mont.



SE C

McGovern

the reports led consumers to believe the beef is not meat, but an unhealthy slime unfit for human consumption.

Bar Politicians From State Health Plan?

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska Sen. Jeremy Nordquist wants to shut the governor and other officials out of the state employee health plan.

Nordquist says he will introduce a bill next year that would treat elected state office-holders the same as their constituents. He says the bill would force lawmakers, the governor and other officials to buy their own insurance through the private market or in the exchanges required under the federal health care law.

Republican Gov. Dave Heineman submitted a proposal for a high-deductible health savings plan to the federal government this month. He deemed it the "Nebraska option."

Nordquist, a Democrat, says many families can't afford the plan's \$8,000 out-of-pocket deductible. He says he wants to send a message: What's good for constituents should be good for elected officials.

Lottery Ticket Sold In R.C. Worth \$5,000

RAPID CITY (AP) — A Wild Card 2 ticket sold in Rapid City is worth \$5,000 in the Wednesday drawing.

South Dakota lottery officials say the ticket matched all five white ball numbers but missed the Wild Card, and won the game's second prize. The odds of doing so are one in about 90,600.

The winner has about six months to claim the money.

Wild Card 2 is played in the Dakotas, Montana and Idaho. The jackpot sits at \$185,000 for the next drawing, on Saturday.