

Richmond Times-Dispatch

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

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RICHMOND WEATHER WOES

WHAT HAPPENED: Recent weather caused a power outage Monday at the city's James River water plant. That led to problems with the filter gallery, a piece of equipment used to treat water.

THE RESULT: Thousands of customers lost water and the city issued a boil order. Richmond Mayor Danny Avula said crews have been working to fix the issue.

MORE ONLINE: Visit go.richmond.com/water to see a video explaining what happened and tell us about your experience.

WITHOUT WATER

Crews work to fix equipment failure that triggered boil alert, outage

SAMUEL B. PARKER, THAD GREEN, EM HOLTER AND MEREDITH LINDEMOM
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Richmond may not have drinkable water until Thursday due to ongoing issues with the recently repaired water treatment plant, a leaked internal email between officials with the state's Department of Environmental Quality shows.

Richmond has been largely without running water since Monday afternoon, when the Byrd Park Reservoir ran dry following a weather-related power failure and flood at the city's water treatment plant.

While power has been restored, officials have struggled to get the system in working order, citing extensive damage to electronic equipment, IT issues and several instances of subsequent electrical failure among facility components.

In a Tuesday morning news conference, Mayor Danny Avula said running water should resume by 2 p.m. that afternoon. That didn't happen, but no specific updates to the timeline were provided.



MIKE KROPP, TIMES-DISPATCH

An aerial view of the Byrd Park Reservoir on Tuesday. Ongoing issues with the repaired water treatment plant could cause Richmond to be without drinkable water until Thursday, according to a leaked internal email.

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Byrd Park Reservoir



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"I thought it was just me, but then I found out by Googling it that it was a whole city issue."
Jacky Ruiz, resident who lives near VCU

"What's frustrating to us is that the city knew the problem at 10 a.m. yesterday morning, but we didn't realize it before we opened."
Natalie McNamara, CEO of Harry's at the Hofheimer

MORE ONLINE: Aim your smartphone camera at this code and tap the link to see Richmond Mayor Danny Avula's news conference about the water outage. [NEWSVU](#)

PUBLIC RECORDS

'Secret police' case heard by Virginia appeals court

LUCA POWELL
Richmond Times-Dispatch

The Virginia Court of Appeals on Tuesday heard arguments in a case that could set a significant transparency threshold for police departments.

The case is born of a routine public records request made by a private citizen that was mostly denied by the Hanover County Sheriff Col. David Hines. The

request was made by Alice Minium, who runs a police transparency and accountability website, who asked Hines for a copy of the public agency's payroll.

Virginia law specifies that payrolls — which offer a window of how taxpayer dollars are being spent — are a public record with few privacy protections.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dems, Youngkin clash on ideas

MICHAEL MARTZ AND DAVE RESS
Richmond Times-Dispatch

House Speaker Don Scott, D-Portsmouth, expects a "boring session" of the General Assembly to begin on Wednesday, but that might be wishful thinking.

Lawmakers began arriving in Richmond this week with the Capitol complex temporarily closed because of a breakdown in public water service in Richmond after a winter storm.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin is trying to secure a legacy in his final year in office with another round of tax relief, but the

Democrats who control both chambers — pending the outcome of three special elections Tuesday night — have different ideas about how to benefit the most taxpayers while investing in public education and other priorities.

"The governor just needs to drive the bus," Scott said Tuesday. "We'll tell him where to go."

Lawmakers in both parties also will be mindful of impending elections in November for governor, lieutenant

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Trump: Not ruling out use of military to seize Panama Canal
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