



Kentucky Hospital Research & Education Foundation Emergency Preparedness Update for February 21, 2021

Eastern Kentucky still feeling impact of wicked winter storm, some could go another week without power

(KyForward News/Kentucky Today) Nearly 20,000 Kentucky Power customers in Eastern Kentucky are still without electricity and it could be another week or longer before some of them have their power restored, the company said Saturday morning.

At the peak, 59,204 customers were out of power after the second ice storm in a week and now with more than 68% restored, approximately 19,500 customers remain without power.

Boyd, Carter and Lawrence counties were the hardest hit with extensive damage to the circuits providing electricity in those areas, the company said.

"The magnitude of damage in this area is proving to be unprecedented and total reconstruction of destroyed circuits is necessary," Kentucky Power's website said in an update Saturday morning. "Weather is finally permitting helicopters to access damage to miles of circuit."

More than 2,000 Kentucky Power employees, foresters and assessors are working to get power restored.

Full story: <https://www.kyforward.com/eastern-kentucky-still-feeling-impact-of-wicked-winter-storm-some-could-go-another-week-without-power/>

Over 14 million Texans are still without safe water as officials grapple with crisis

(CBS) Water is slowly returning to Texans nearly a week after an unprecedented winter storm led to widespread power outages and created water issues for millions. More than 14 million people are still without water or are under boil water notices.

"We've seen the total population being impacted by that go down to about 14.3 million, where it was about 14.9 million yesterday," said Toby Baker, executive director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, at a press conference Saturday. Residents with no water dropped from 350,000 to about 156,000 overnight, he said. Public water systems in Texas are any system that has more than 15 connections — in all about 7,000 systems.

Learn more: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/texas-boil-water-notices-winter-storm/>

After the snow melts, the flooding will begin. Here's how to prepare

(CNN) You're probably familiar with the [dangers that snow and ice pose for motorists](#). But how about your home?

More than 73% of the United States mainland was covered by snow last week, according to the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Water Prediction](#).

Soon, [warmer temperatures](#) will thaw that snow and ice, creating snowmelt runoff and increasing the risk for leaks and [floods](#).

Unprepared homeowners, especially those in the South, where snowstorms aren't common, face the prospect of widespread damage and costly repairs.

Full story: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/21/us/flood-prepare-weather-snow-melt-trnd/index.html>

COVID-19 cases pass 28 million in U.S., deaths near 500,000

Learn more: https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2021/02/20/COVID-19-cases-pass-28-million-in-US-deaths-near-500000/1171613837212/

Related - Covid-19 hospitalizations in the US dip to lowest level since November

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/20/health/us-coronavirus-saturday/index.html>

KY COVID Updates

New cases reported today are 979, with 145 18 or under. Positivity rate is 6.72%. There were 21 new deaths recorded. Full daily data: <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/COVID19DailyReport.pdf>

Fauci: Americans may still need masks to fight COVID in 2022

(Reuters) - The United States faces a dark milestone despite a recent decline in COVID-19 cases as it prepares to mark a staggering half million deaths this week, nearly a year after the novel coronavirus pandemic upended the country with dueling public health and economic crises.

While the number of COVID-19 cases fell for the fifth straight week and officials scrambled to inoculate the population, the nation prepared to soon reach 500,000 deaths from the highly infectious respiratory disease. "It's nothing like we've ever been through in the last 102 years since the 1918 influenza pandemic... It really is a terrible situation that we've been through - and that we're still going through," Dr. Anthony Fauci, White House COVID-19 medical adviser and the nation's top infectious disease official, told CNN's "State of the Union" program on Sunday.

Read more; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa/americans-may-still-need-masks-to-fight-covid-in-2022-fauci-says-idUSKBN2ALOCZ>

COVID-19 detection: Could your Apple Watch or Fitbit help slow the coronavirus pandemic?

Read more - <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2021/02/19/apple-watch-samsung-galaxy-fitbit-wearables-studied-covid-19-detection/6745985002/>

***BUT...* Pulse oximeters should not be used to diagnose COVID-19, U.S. FDA says**

Learn more: <https://news360.com/article/549334357>

Doctors call for expedited COVID vaccination before variants become widespread in U.S.

<https://news360.com/article/549341570>

No evidence COVID-19 spreads through food, food packaging

(UPI) There's no evidence that the new coronavirus can spread through food or food packaging, U.S. health officials say. Of the more than 100 million cases of COVID-19 worldwide, there hasn't been any epidemiological evidence of food or food packaging as the source of coronavirus transmission to humans -- national and international surveillance systems have found no signs of such transmission.

"After more than a year since the coronavirus disease 2019 [COVID-19] outbreak was declared a global health emergency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continue to underscore that there is no credible evidence of food or food packaging associated with or as a likely source of viral transmission of ... the virus causing COVID-19," Acting USDA Secretary Kevin Shea and Acting FDA Commissioner Dr. Janet Woodcock said in a statement.

Full story: https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2021/02/19/FDA-No-evidence-COVID-19-spreads-through-food-food-packaging/8741613692651/

That Sugary Frosting Was Cocaine: Customs Agents seize shipment of corn flakes worth nearly \$3M

(Newser) It's not often that anyone talks about the street value of corn flakes. But Customs and Border Patrol officers said they intercepted a shipment of cereal last week whose secret ingredient was cocaine. The 44 pounds of corn flakes had a street value of just under \$3 million, Cincinnati.com reports. Bico, a narcotic-detecting dog working for Customs, alerted agents in Cincinnati to the shipment. When they opened a box, they found a white powder, and the flakes had been covered in a grayish substance. Tests confirmed the presence of cocaine. Full story: <http://newser.com/s302787>

Bird Flu Jumped to Humans for First Time: Russia

(Newser) Russia has reported the first instances of a strain of bird flu jumping from poultry to humans to the World Health Organization. The outbreak happened at a plant in southern Russia, officials said. "All seven people... are now feeling well," said Anna Popova, chief of the nation's consumer health watchdog. Humans have been infected with other strains of bird flu, but not this one: H5N8. Popova said that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission, the BBC reports, and that steps had been taken to prevent further infections. The cases were reported "several days ago, just as we became absolutely certain of our results," Popova said Saturday. The workers were asymptomatic, WHO officials said. The Vector Institute in Siberia plans to start work on developing human tests for the strain, as well as an H5N8 vaccine.

Read more: <http://newser.com/s302799>

The KHREF Emergency Preparedness Update is assembled several times a week. When events make it necessary, the Update may be sent out several times a day to keep our hospital and the healthcare community advised on preparedness news and information. Most of this information is compiled from open sources, and where possible reference links will be provided. There is an archive of [Emergency Preparedness Updates available here](#). If you would like to add or delete, or have something you would like to contribute to a future edition of the Emergency Preparedness Update, please contact Preparedness@kyha.com (include your current email address). The preparedness program for the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and KHREF are supported by US DHHS ASPR HPP funds through a contract with Kentucky Public Health.