



THE LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

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Dennis Brown/LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

Firefighters have been busy battling a spate of recent fires made more damaging by windy and dry conditions. Area residents are reminded of outdoor burning restrictions and urged to exercise extreme caution through the fire hazard season.

Multiple fires keep crews busy

By Dennis K. Brown

Firefighters from across Lewis County have responded to multiple fires over the past several days, including a brush fire that spread out of control and a structure fire near the Fleming County line, as officials continue to urge caution during the spring burn season.

Crews were called just after 3:00 p.m. Sunday to a reported brush fire on McDowell Creek Road that began as a reported controlled burn but quickly spread up a hillside.

Firefighters from Garrison, Firebrick, Black Oak, and Lewis County departments responded, along with the Kentucky Division of Forestry.

The fire continued to spread into the Lower Twin Branch area, with heavy smoke reported and concerns for nearby structures.

Additional tankers and manpower were requested as crews worked to contain the fire.

Forestry crews later arrived on scene with a dozer to assist in containment efforts.

Units remained on scene for more than two hours before clearing around 5:30 p.m. No injuries were reported, though EMS was called to check on a resident who reported breathing difficulties.

Earlier, firefighters responded Friday afternoon to a structure fire on KY 57 near the Fleming County line. The call came in just before 3:00 p.m. reporting an outbuilding fully engulfed in flames.

Crews from Tollesboro and Mt. Carmel responded and worked to contain the blaze and prevent further spread.

The outbuilding was destroyed, and a nearby home sustained damage from intense heat.

Firefighters remained on scene for more than an hour before clearing. No injuries were reported.

In addition to those in-

idents, firefighters and emergency management personnel have responded to several illegal burns across the county in recent days.

In one case, responders determined a resident was burning prohibited materials that produced excessive smoke. The fire was extinguished, and the resident agreed to properly dispose of the debris.

Officials say the incidents serve as a reminder of Kentucky's outdoor burning laws and current seasonal restrictions.

Materials such as plastics, treated lumber, tires and household garbage are prohibited from being burned under state law.

In addition, Kentucky's spring forest fire hazard season is now in effect. Outdoor burning within 150 feet of woodland or brushland is prohibited between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., and all fires must be attended until they are completely extinguished.

Residents are encour-

aged to check regulations before burning and to contact Lewis County Emergency Management or their local fire department with any questions regarding outdoor burning.

The incidents remain under investigation.

Board of Ed meets

By Dennis K. Brown

The Lewis County Board of Education met in a special called session at the Board Office, addressing a wide range of operational updates, approvals and personnel matters.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation, followed by an attendance update from Lori O'Keefe. Instructional Supervisor Sara Smith provided highlights from across the district, including recognition of student achievements at Lewis County High School and the Lewis County Career and Technical Center.

Departmental updates were presented by Quentin Allen for technology, Bill Allen for transportation and Woody Underwood for operations. Principals Jack Lykins and Jeremy Ruckel also provided reports on school-level activities and progress.

Board members approved the minutes from the February 9 meeting and adopted an amended 2025-2026 school calendar. The board also approved renewal of student

accident insurance for the 2026-2027 school year and updated a municipal advisory agreement.

Several facility and infrastructure items were approved, including direct purchase orders with Mid-Atlantic Roofing Supply for roof replacement projects at Lewis County High School and Tollesboro Elementary. The board also approved eRate filings for a cabling project and for a request for proposals related to a temporary internet connection for the bus garage.

Additional approvals included a lease agreement with Gateway Commu-

nity Action, a photography request for proposal and advertisement, and the All "A" Classic contract. Multiple student field trips were approved, including out-of-state travel for ROTC, FRYSC, Skills USA, FBLA and elementary school groups.

The board approved an application for Lewis County Middle School to become a Special Olympics Unified Champion School and a grant

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Collision sends one to hospital

By Dennis K. Brown

Emergency crews responded last week to an injury accident involving a semi and a pickup truck on the Grayson Spur.

The call came in just before 5:00 p.m. for a collision near the intersection of the Grayson Spur and Lower Kinney Road.

According to initial reports, the driver of a pickup truck crossed the center line and struck the wheels of a semi trailer traveling in the opposite direction.

Both drivers were able to exit their vehicles following the crash.

Air Evac was requested early in the response but was later canceled after crews assessed the scene.

Lewis County EMS transported the driver of the pickup truck to Southern Ohio Medical Center for treatment.

The semi, which was hauling approximately 31,000 pounds of house-

hold disinfectant cleaner, sustained damage to its trailer axle and multiple tires.

A heavy wrecker was called to remove the damaged trailer from the roadway.

Multiple agencies responded to the scene, including Lewis County

EMS, the Lewis County Sheriff's Office, Vanceburg Police Department, Lewis County Emergency Management, and firefighters from Garrison, Black Oak, and Lewis County departments.

The roadway was later cleared and reopened to traffic.

Eminent domain law wins house approval

Herald Report

Legislation sponsored by Rep. Myron Dossett, R-Pembroke, that would make changes to Kentucky's eminent domain laws won unanimous approval from the House of Representatives on Friday.

Eminent domain is the process by which government agencies can obtain private property through condemnation for public projects. Dossett explained to his colleagues

that House Bill 542 is important legislation.

"The goal is to improve communications and transparency during negotiations with property owners and those authorities who have the power to condemn. We are including conservation easements, agricultural districts and all property owners in this."

The bill includes language that forbids those seeking property (known

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Text scam targets drivers

By Dennis K. Brown

Officials are warning residents about a text message scam falsely claiming drivers owe unpaid tolls or traffic violations.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) said fraudulent messages are circulating that impersonate the agency, the Office of Highway Safety and driver licensing offices. The texts often claim a "payment is due" and warn that enforcement actions will be taken if the issue is not resolved.

The messages typically include links to websites designed to resemble official state pages, but officials stress they are scams intended to steal personal and financial information.

KYTC officials said they are actively working to have the fraudulent websites taken down.

Sheriff Johnny Bivens is also urging residents to use caution.

"These messages are designed to create panic and get people to act quickly," Bivens said. "If you receive one, do not click the link. Take a moment and verify the information through official sources."

Officials emphasized that KYTC does not collect traffic ticket fees or notify drivers of violations through text messages. They also note that Kentucky agencies do not refer to themselves as "KDOT" or a "DMV" in official communications.

The only official website for Kentucky motor vehicle and driver services is drive.ky.gov. Residents are advised to watch for slight variations in web addresses, such as added hyphens or misspellings.

How to spot a scam text

- Messages demanding immediate payment for traffic violations or tolls
- Threats of penalties, license suspension or additional fees

- Links that appear similar to official government websites

- Messages from unfamiliar or international phone numbers

What to do if you receive one

- Do not click the link or reply to the message
- Delete the text immediately

- Verify any concerns by contacting the agency directly

- Report the message to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov

- or the Federal Trade Commission at reportfraud.ftc.gov

- Report scams to the

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This pickup was extensively damaged in a collision with a semi trailer on the Grayson Spur of the AA Highway. The driver wasn't seriously hurt.

\$1.00

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