

Officials push away questions about lack of widespread warnings before deadly Texas floods

BY NADIA LATHAN AND JOHN SEEWER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

KERRVILLE, Texas (AP) — Public officials in charge of finding victims of the devastating flooding in Texas pushed away intensifying questions Tuesday about who was monitoring the weather that killed more than 100 people and warning that floodwaters were barreling toward camps and homes.

Leaders in Kerr County, where searchers have found 87 bodies, said their first priority is recovering victims, not reviewing what happened in the hours before the flash floods inundated the state's Hill Country.

“Right now, this team up here is focused on bringing people home,” Lt. Col. Ben Baker of the Texas Game Wardens, said during a sometimes tense news conference where officials were questioned about the timing of their response.

Hope of finding survivors was increasingly bleak. Four days have passed since anyone was found alive in the aftermath of the floods in Kerr County, officials said Tuesday.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott planned to make another visit Tuesday to Camp Mystic, the century-old all-girls Christian summer camp where at least 27 campers and counselors died during the floods. Officials said Tuesday that five campers and one counselor have still not been found.

President Donald Trump planned to visit Friday and called the flooding “an unprecedented event.”

SCENES OF DEVASTATION AT CAMP MYSTIC

Outside the cabins at Camp Mystic where the girls had slept, mud-splattered blankets and pillows were scattered on a grassy hill that slopes toward the river. Also in the debris were pink, purple and light blue luggage decorated with stickers.

Among those who died at the camp were a second grader who loved pink sparkles and bows in her curly



Eli Hartman | AP

Campers belongings sit outside one of Camp Mystic's cabins near the Guadalupe River after a flash flood swept through the area Monday, July 7, 2025, in Hunt, Texas.

hair, a 19-year-old counselor who enjoyed mentoring young girls and the camp's 75-year-old director.

The flash floods erupted before daybreak Friday after massive rains sent water speeding down hills into the Guadalupe River, causing it to rise 26 feet (8 meters) in less than an hour. The wall of water overwhelmed people in cabins, tents and trailers along the river's edge, pulling them into the water. Some survivors were found clinging to trees.

Some campers had to swim out of cabin windows to safety while others held onto a rope as they made their way to higher ground. Time-lapse videos showed how floodwaters covered roads in a matter of minutes.

Although it's difficult to attribute a single weather event to climate change, experts say a warming atmosphere and oceans make catastrophic storms more likely.

WHERE WERE THE WARNINGS?

Questions mounted about what, if any, actions local officials took to warn campers and residents who were spending the July Fourth weekend in the scenic area long known to locals as “flash

flood alley.”

Kerr County Sheriff Larry Leitha said that sending out warnings isn't “as easy as pushing a button.” Answers about who did what and when will come later, public officials said.

Kerr County Judge Rob Kelly, the county's chief elected official, said in the hours after the devastation that the county does not have a warning system.

Generations of families in the Hill Country have known the dangers. A 1987 flood forced the evacuation of a youth camp in the town of Comfort and swamped buses and vans. Ten teenagers were killed.

Local leaders have talked for years about the need for a warning system. Kerr County sought a nearly \$1 million grant eight years ago for such a system, but the request was turned down by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Local residents balked at footing the bill themselves, Kelly said.

Some camps were aware of the dangers Friday and monitored the weather. At least one moved several hundred campers to higher ground before the floods. But many people didn't move or were caught by surprise.

RECOVERY AND CLEANUP GOES ON

The bodies of 30 children were among those that have been recovered in Kerr County, home to Camp Mystic and several other summer camps, the sheriff said.

The devastation spread across several hundred miles in central Texas all the way to just outside the capital city of Austin.

Nineteen deaths were reported in Travis, Burnet, Kendall, Tom Green and Williamson counties, local officials said.

Aidan Duncan escaped just in time after hearing the muffled blare of a megaphone urging residents to evacuate Riverside RV Park in the Hill Country town of Ingram.

All of his belongings — a mattress, sports cards, his pet parakeet's bird cage — now sit in caked mud in front of his home.

“What's going on right now, it hurts,” the 17-year-old said. “I literally cried so hard.”

Search-and-rescue teams used heavy equipment to untangle trees and move large rocks as part of the massive search for missing people. Hundreds of volunteers showed up to help with one of the largest search operations in Texas history.

Trump says US must send more weapons to Ukraine

BY ILLIA NOVIKOV AND AAMER MADHANI
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Monday the U.S. will have to send more weapons to Ukraine, just days after ordering a pause in critical weapons deliveries to Kyiv.

The comments by Trump appeared to be an abrupt change in posture after the Pentagon announced last week that it would hold back delivering to Ukraine some air defense missiles, precision-guided artillery and other weapons because of what U.S. officials said were concerns that stockpiles have declined too much.

“We have to,” Trump said. “They have to be able to defend themselves. They're getting hit very hard now. We're going to send some more weapons — defensive weapons primarily.”

The pause had come at a difficult moment for Ukraine, which has faced increasing — and more complex — air barrages from Russia during the more than three-year-long war. Russian attacks on Ukraine killed at least 11 civilians and injured more than 80 others, including seven children, officials said Monday.

THE US TURNAROUND ON WEAPONS FOR UKRAINE

The move last week to abruptly pause shipments of Patriot missiles, precision-guided GMLRS, Hellfire missiles and Howitzer rounds and weaponry took Ukrainian officials and other allies by surprise.

The Pentagon affirmed late Monday that at Trump's direction, it would resume weapons shipments to Ukraine “to ensure the Ukrainians can defend themselves while we work to secure a lasting peace and ensure the killing stops.” Still, spokesman Sean Parnell added that its framework for Trump to evaluate military shipments worldwide continues as part of “America First” defense priorities.

Trump, speaking at the start of a dinner he was hosting for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House on Monday, vented his growing frustration with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Trump has struggled to find a resolution to the war in Ukraine but maintains he's determined to quickly conclude a conflict that he had promised as candidate to end of Day One of his second term.

He has threatened, but held off on, imposing new sanctions against Russia's oil industry to try to prod Putin into peace talks.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said last week that Trump has given him the go-ahead to push forward with a bill he's co-sponsoring that calls, in part, for a 500% tariff on goods imported from countries that continue to buy Russian oil. The move would have huge ramifications for China and India, two economic behemoths that buy Russian oil.

“I'm not happy with President Putin at all,” Trump said Monday.

RUSSIA'S TRANSPORT MINISTER IS FOUND DEAD

Separately, Russia's transport minister was found dead in what authorities said was an apparent suicide — news that broke hours after the Kremlin announced he had been dismissed by Putin.

The firing of Roman Starovoit followed a weekend of travel chaos — airports grounded hundreds of flights due to the threat of drone attacks from Ukraine. Russian officials did not give a reason for his dismissal.

Hundreds of flights were canceled or delayed at airports in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but Russian commentators said the air traffic disruptions have become customary amid frequent Ukrainian drone raids and were unlikely to have triggered his dismissal.

Starovoit, 53, served as Russia's transport minister since May 2024.

NOTICE TO PULASKI COUNTY TAXPAYERS

Tim Price, Pulaski County Clerk, pursuant to KRS 424.130, announces that the 2023 Delinquent Real Property Tax Bills (Certificates of Delinquency) will be published in the Commonwealth Journal **July 15, 2025**. The list of Certificates of Delinquency is also available for public inspection during the hours of 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at the County Clerk's office, located at 100 Main St., Room 208, Somerset, KY 42501. This list may also be inspected on the Pulaski County Court Clerk's Web site. The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) of the Web site is: Kydtax.smllc.us

The tax sale will be held on **Aug. 14, 2025** beginning at 9:00 a.m. All interested participants must register with the County Clerk's office by the close of business on **Aug. 4, 2025**. Please contact the County Clerk's office if you need additional information about the tax sale registration process, the required registration fee or the deposit amounts that will be needed. Taxpayers can continue to pay their delinquent tax bills to the County Clerk's office anytime prior to the tax sale. **PLEASE NOTE: All payments must be RECEIVED in the County Clerk's office PRIOR to the tax sale date listed in this advertisement. Payments received after the tax sale has been conducted will be returned without exception.** Some delinquencies – although they have been advertised – will be excluded from the tax sale in accordance with the provisions of KRS 134.504(10)(b). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the County Clerk's office at 606-679-2042. Contact Jenny Sparks. **No personal checks accepted. Money orders, cashier's checks or cash. We accept debit and credit cards but charge a convenience fee of \$4.00 of the total price.**