

Chicago Tribune



QUESTIONS? CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Report: Toxic emissions raised cancer risks

CDC says ethylene oxide may pose dangers to Lake County neighbors

By Michael Hawthorne
Chicago Tribune

People living near two Lake County industries could face significantly greater risks of developing certain cancers, according to a new federal study based on monitoring of ethylene oxide pollution

in surrounding neighborhoods.

Emissions of the highly toxic gas from Vantage Specialty Chemicals in Gurnee were responsible for long-term cancer risks up to 20 times higher than federal guidelines, the report found.

Three miles away, in the southwest corner of Waukegan, the

risks posed by Medline Industries' pollution were up to 10 times greater than 1 cancer case among 10,000 people exposed — the highest rate federal officials consider acceptable.

The study, released Friday by an arm of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is a snapshot of potential dangers.

Air quality testing near Vantage and Medline during 2019 and 2020 detected spikes of ethylene

oxide, also known as EtO, when the wind blew away from the facilities toward homes and apartments. Both companies reported emitting substantially larger quantities of the gas in previous years, suggesting the risks to long-time residents could be even higher than the study estimated.

"It's unfortunate we will never know much EtO we've been exposed to," said Celeste Flores, a Gurnee resident who grew up in

the area and now lives a mile from Medline and about 2 miles from Vantage.

Changes in state law and permitting, prompted in part by Chicago Tribune reporting, required both companies to begin dramatically reducing EtO emissions in 2019.

Medline's emissions are limited to 150 pounds a year, down from 3,058 pounds in 2014 and 8,638

Turn to Emissions, Page 2

High court upholds 1994 gun control law

Case fought ban on access in domestic violence situations

By Mark Sherman
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court upheld a federal gun control law Friday that is intended to protect victims of domestic violence.

In their first Second Amendment case since they expanded gun rights in 2022, the justices ruled 8-1 in favor of a 1994 ban on firearms for people under restraining orders to stay away from their spouses or partners. The justices reversed a ruling from the federal appeals court in New Orleans that had struck down the law.

Chief Justice John Roberts, writing for the court, said the law uses "common sense" and applies only "after a judge determines that an individual poses a credible threat" of physical violence.

Justice Clarence Thomas, the author of the major 2022 Bruen ruling in a New York case, dissented.

President Joe Biden, who has been critical of previous high-court rulings on guns, abortion and other hot-button issues, praised the outcome.

"No one who has been abused should have to worry about their abuser getting a gun," Biden said in a statement. "As a result of today's ruling, survivors of domestic violence and their families will still be able to count on critical protections, just as they have for the past three decades."

Last week, the court overturned a Trump-era ban on

Turn to Law, Page 6

Former legislator sentenced

Ex-state Rep. Annazette Collins was sentenced to a year in federal prison in a tax fraud case the judge called an "egregious" effort to avoid paying her fair share, followed by "veiled denials and blame shifting."

Chicagoland, Page 3



Review: Daniil Trifonov with CSO

Hannah Edgar reviews Russian pianist Daniil Trifonov performing with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Trifonov, who becomes the CSO's artist-in-residence next season, plays a piano concerto specially written for him by composer Mason Bates. **Arts & Living**



TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

March for peace after teen charged in boy's shooting death

Vanessa Rivera, second from right, holds a Spider-Man toy as she is comforted during a march for peace on West Jackson Boulevard in Chicago on Friday near the Oakley Square apartment complex where her nephew, Jai'Mani Amir Rivera, was killed Tuesday. **Page 4**



Gretchen Stelter, shown Friday near her home in Madison, Wisconsin, has filed a lawsuit against American Airlines alleging its employees did not protect her when a male passenger sexually harassed her during a flight. **STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Woman sues American Airlines over incident with seatmate

She alleges crew no help as drunken man harassed, groped her

By Christy Gutowski
Chicago Tribune

Heading home after a guided food-tour excursion in Mexico with her girlfriends, Gretchen Stelter settled into her window seat in business class on American Airlines and began editing a

book manuscript for her new job.

The 42-year-old editor, worried about a fast-approaching deadline, said she hoped her open laptop and the AirPods in her ears would discourage the chatty passenger next to her. When her plan failed, Stelter said, she "gave up" on work and made small talk with the man during their two-hour flight from Dallas-Fort Worth to Chicago.

But according to Stelter's

pending lawsuit, American Airlines employees failed to protect her from what happened next: Her seatmate, who ordered two double vodka sodas, became "uncontrollably drunk and loudly sexually harassed" her. He also grabbed her buttocks as she moved to exchange seats with a sympathetic passenger, the complaint alleges.

Stelter's lawsuit, filed in Cook

Turn to Incident, Page 4

Campaign finance loophole revealed

Illinois election board ruling shows discrepancy on PACs

By Rick Pearson
Chicago Tribune

A recent decision by the Illinois State Board of Elections dismissing a complaint stemming from the 2022 governor election has revealed a potentially serious loophole in state law regarding campaign finance and a special type of political action committee.

Board members voted 7-1 earlier this week to dismiss a complaint filed by Democrats against Dan Proft, a right-wing radio talk show host and political operative who ran an independent expenditure PAC, and unsuccessful Republican governor candidate Darren Bailey.

The Democrats alleged Proft and his PAC, named People Who Play By The Rules, coordinated with Bailey and his campaign committee to make spending decisions, in violation of campaign finance reporting rules. Under state law, independent expenditure PACs are not supposed to coordinate electioneering communications

Turn to Loophole, Page 2

