

Weather



National Weather Service
Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low around 37. South wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 66. North wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Tuesday Night: A 50 percent chance of rain after 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33. Breezy, with a north wind between 15 and 25 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph.

Wednesday: Rain and snow likely before 1 p.m., then a chance of rain. Cloudy, with a high near 40. Breezy, with a north wind around 25 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy and blustery, with a low around 23.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 47.

Thursday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 29.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 56.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy and breezy, with a low around 37.

Saturday: A 20 percent chance of rain. Mostly sunny and windy, with a high near 53.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy and breezy, with a low around 26.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 50.

Friday: High, 59; Low 26
Saturday: High, 71; Low 28
Sunday: High, 62; Low 30
Precip: Friday None
Saturday None
Sunday None
Month: 2.91 inches
Year: 19.38 inches
Normal: 17.78 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)

Sunrise and Sunset
Tuesday 8:12 a.m. 6:43 p.m.
Moon: waxing, 40 percent
Wednesday 8:13 a.m. 6:42 p.m.
First quarter Moon at 11:38 a.m.
(U.S. Naval Observatory)

Final bodies found after explosion

From “EXPLOSION,” Page 1

modeled it.”

Family members and friends turned the sign outside the elevator into a memorial for the workers. A sweatshirt with Federinko’s name written on it in marker also was marked, “Why!”

Bartlett Grain President Bill Fellows said in a statement that workers were loading a train with corn when the explosion occurred, but the cause of the explosion remained unclear. The company brought in a South Dakota-based engineer with expertise in such accidents to help federal safety investigators at the scene.

Farmers take their grain to grain elevators after harvest to store it before it is marketed or sold. The Bartlett grain bin is a large, concrete structure for elevating, storing, discharging, and sometimes processing grain.

Over the past four decades, there have more than 600 explosions at grain elevators, killing more than 250 people and injuring more than 1,000, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Last year, there were non-fatal grain explosions or fires in several states including

Nebraska, Illinois, Ohio, South Dakota and Louisiana.

When grain is handled at elevators, it creates dust that floats around inside the storage facility. The finer the grain dust particles, the greater its volatility. Typically, something – perhaps sparks from equipment or a cigarette – ignites the dust. That sends a pressure wave that detonates the rest of the floating dust in the facility.

Fireballs are a common feature of grain dust explosions, where intense heat from the blast can reach 1,500 to 2,000 degrees.

Dust from corn is among the most dangerous. Most dust explosions happen in late summer and early fall when old, dried grain is being cleaned out of elevators in preparation for the harvest. Freshly harvested corn is less explosive because its wetter.

The Atchison elevator, which is federally licensed to handle up to 1.18 million bushels, is among roughly 850-plus elevators in Kansas. The state is now winding up its fall harvest of corn, sorghum and soybeans.

OSHA has expanded its inspections and efforts to control volatile grain dust in Kansas elevators since an explosion in 1998 at DeBruce Grain Inc.’s facility in Haysville,

which killed seven workers and injured 10 others, said Tom Tunnell, executive director of the Kansas Grain and Feed Association, the industry group representing Kansas grain elevators.

“If ever an industry is as well trained, it is ours. We understand dust is an explosive agent and our members work hard to control it,” Tunnell said Sunday.

The Atchison facility where the blast occurred has not been cited for any violations in the last 10 years, according to OSHA data, though Bartlett Grain Co. was cited after two people died in separate incidents at two of its other facilities. Neither of those fatalities involved explosions at grain elevators.

In 2007, a Bartlett Grain maintenance employee died in a fall from a work platform at the company’s facility in St. Joseph, Mo. In 2004, another employee died while operating a lift that fell backward at a company site in Kansas City, Mo.

“The industry has had a good record – except for a few of this type – considering the billions and billions of bushels of grain handled,” Tunnell said.

Closing pension gap will be expensive

From “GAP,” Page 1

state tax dollars to KPERS and issuing as much as \$5 billion in bonds to eliminate what’s known as the system’s unfunded liability.

“Pay now or pay later, but you’re still going to pay,” said House Speaker Mike O’Neal, a Hutchinson Republican and Brownback ally who supports moving toward a 401(k)-style plan for new hires. “There’s no magic pill that’s going to fix the unfunded liability. There’s going to be some tough love involved.”

Brownback appears to be preparing an ambitious agenda for the 2012 Legislature. A task force is drafting a plan to overhaul the state’s Medicaid program, to cut the costs of covering medical care for the needy, and a top aide recently discussed details of a coming plan on education funding during a gathering of school administrators. A task force is working on a plan to cut taxes.

Bolstering the state pension system also is on his list, but the governor was careful to say last week that he’s waiting to see what the commission develops. He’s said repeatedly that he favors moving toward a 401(k)-style plan.

The commission will consider not only that idea but also a “stack” plan for new hires, in which the first part of a worker’s salary, from \$50,000 to \$80,000, is covered by a traditional plan and the rest, by a 401(k)-style plan.

Backers of moving toward a 401(k)-style plan argue that doing so will help control the

state’s long-term costs, by tying benefits to the system’s earnings. Also, they contend that many employees, particularly younger ones, will do better.

Public employee groups loathe the idea. They’re skeptical – given experiences in the Great Recession – of claims that workers will do better and argue that their retirement benefits are likely to become less generous and less certain.

But the debate about moving toward a 401(k)-style plan is largely about the future, and whatever happens, the long-term funding gap from current plans must be addressed.

“I do want to make sure we cover how we pay for this unfunded liability,” said Frederick Poccia, a study commission member from Overland Park with more than 30 years in the banking and financial services industries.

The latest estimate for the unfunded liability, released in July, represents the estimate at the end of 2010, before this year’s law was enacted. The law is expected to reduce the gap, but changes for workers and the state’s commitment of extra tax dollars won’t be triggered unless the commission makes additional recommendations and legislators consider them by 2012.

And commission members still expect that, even if the law’s provisions do take effect, a significant unfunded liability will remain.

Changes in workers’ pension plans mandated by this year’s law would take effect in 2014.

The state would boost its contribution to KPERS by about \$14 million in July 2013, ramping

up the increase to \$113 million in July 2018.

But even with those increases, the contribution could go higher still – and would, if Kansas law simply said that the state would contribute whatever is required to keep up with increases in commitments to workers. The law now caps annual increases, a move state Sen. Laura Kelly, a Topeka Democrat, and study commission member, said results in ongoing underfunding of KPERS and therefore “makes no sense.”

Of course, the cap does make sense in the context of the entire state budget. If there were no cap, the state would be forced to allocate dollars to teachers’ and government workers’ pensions that could go to public schools, social services and public safety.

Still, commission members plan to discuss eliminating the cap.

Commission members also

plan to consider recommending issuing bonds. Such a plan anticipates that earnings from investing the funds raised will outstrip the payments on the debt, while giving KPERS an infusion of cash to close the long-term funding gap.

The state tried it in 2004, issuing \$500 million in bonds, only to see the long-term funding gap still jump because of investment losses during the Great Recession. Another bond issue – and the annual debt payments – would have to be much larger to make a big dent.

The commission can’t avoid discussing such alternatives, and legislators can’t either, because of the long-term KPERS funding gap.

“It’s probably the 10,000-pound elephant sitting in the room,” said state Sen. Jeff King, an Independence Republican and study commission member.

Ohio county holds zombie outbreak today

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) – A central Ohio county will unleash a zombie outbreak today, hoping to train responders for more likely emergencies through an exercise inspired by a tongue-in-cheek blog from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that urged people to be prepared for a “zombie apocalypse.”

More than 225 volunteers in Delaware County north of Columbus signed up to dress as zombies today in a drill for

officials who would deal with real-life situations involving hazardous materials and disaster response. Emergency responders will test their capabilities as they use standard decontamination procedures to “treat” the zombies and make them “human” again during the exercise at Ohio Wesleyan University.

“People got zombie fever here in Delaware (County),” said Jesse Carter, spokesman for the local health district.

Briefly

Heartland plans festival at school this evening

Heartland Christian School will hold its Fall Festival from 5 to 8 p.m. tonight at the school. There will be games from 5 to 7:30 p.m., supper from 5 to 6:30 p.m. and a volleyball scrimmage from 7 to 8 p.m. Donations will be accepted. For information, call 460-6419.

Join Church of Christ for ‘trunk or treating’

The Colby Church of Christ, 510 East Fourth, invites parents to bring their kids to Trunk or Treat between 5 and 6:30 p.m. today for Halloween for an opportunity to get candy and treats in a safe environment. For information, call the church at 460-6322.

Revenue secretary to visit Chamber office

Kansas Secretary of Revenue Nick Jordan will be in the Thomas County Office Complex meeting room from 4 to 5 p.m. Tuesday as part of a statewide listening tour. For information, call 460-3401.

Colby Diplomats to hold luncheon in November

The Colby Diplomats are inviting local women to the annual Fall Luncheon on Wednesday, Nov. 9, at the Thomas County 4-H Building. Tickets are \$12. RSVP to the Chamber of Commerce office at 460-3401 by Tuesday.

Legion to hold Business After Five

The November Business After Five will be at the American Legion from 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday. For information, call 460-3401.

Brewster church to serve turkey dinner

The Brewster United Methodist Church will hold its 57th Annual Turkey Supper from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the church, 210 Nebraska Ave. Donations will be accepted. For information, call (785) 694-2456.

Catholic church to cook turkey dinner

Sacred Heart Catholic Church will have an old-fashioned Thanksgiving dinner from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6, in the church basement. Dinner will include turkey, ham, potatoes, corn and homemade pie. Donations will be accepted. For information, call 460-7167.

Agriculture department to distribute commodities

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will distribute excess commodities to eligible people from 1 to 2 p.m. Monday, Nov. 7, at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center. Distribution is on first come-first-served basis and participants are asked to not arrive at the distribution site before 12:30 p.m. For information, call the office at 462-6744.

LOCAL TV Listings Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Tuesday Evening November 1, 2011									
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00 11:30
KAKE/ABC	Last Man	Man Up!	Dancing With Stars	Body of Proof			Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live
KBSL/CBS	NCIS		NCIS: Los Angeles	Unforgettable			Local	Late Show Letterman	Late
KSNK/NBC	The Biggest Loser			Parenthood			Local	Tonight Show w/Leno	Late
KSAS/FOX	Glee		New Girl	Raising	Local				
Cable Channels									
A & E	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage
AMC	The Mummy						The Mummy		
ANIM	Blue Planet: Seas	Blue Planet: Seas	Blue Planet: Seas	Blue Planet: Seas	Blue Planet: Seas	Blue Planet: Seas			
BRAVO	Matchmaker	Matchmaker		Mad Fash.	Fashion	Matchmaker	Mad Fash.	Fashion	
CMT	Fried Green Tomatoes					Fried Green Tomatoes			
CNN	Anderson Cooper 360	Piers Morgan Tonight	Anderson Cooper 360			E. B. OutFront	Piers Morgan Tonight		
COMEDY	Work.	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Work.	Daily	Colbert	Tosh.0	Work.
DISC	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	American Guns	Auction	Auction	American Guns	
DISN	Wizards	Little Manhattan		Jessie	ANT Farm	Shake It Up!	Wizards	Wizards	
E!	Sex-City	Sex-City	Dirty Soap		True Hollywood Story	Chelsea	E! News	Chelsea	
ESPN	Unguarded			World, Poker		World, Poker		SportsCenter	
ESPN2	College Football			Gold Glove		SportsCtr	World, Poker		Poker
FAM	Remember	Remember the Titans				The 700 Club		Whose?	Whose?
FOOD	Cupcake Wars	Chopped		Chopped		Chopped		Chopped	
FX	District 9			Sons of Anarchy		Horror Story		Sons of Anarchy	
HGTV	First	First	Property	Property	House	Hunters	Hunters	Property	Property
HIST	Brad Meltzer's Dec.	You Don't Know Dixie				Top Gear		Brad Meltzer's Dec.	
LIFE	Unsolved Mysteries	Wandering Eye				Unsolved Mysteries		Unsolved Mysteries	
MTV	MTV Special	MTV Special		I Used to Be Fat		Chelsea	I Used to Be Fat	Chelsea	
NICK	SpongeBot	SpongeBot	70s Show	70s Show	George	George	Friends	Friends	Friends
SCI	Prince Caspian					The Odyssey			
SPIKE	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Flip Men	Auction	Auction	Auction
TBS	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Conan	Office	Office
TCM	Adventure-Sherlock			Sleeper				Lost in America	
TLC	Couple	Couple	19 Kids	19 Kids	Couple	Couple	Couple	Couple	19 Kids
TNT	Bones		Bones		Bones		Southland		CSI: NY
TOON	Looney	Gumball	King/Hill	King/Hill	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken Aqua Teen
TRAV	America	America	Mysteries-Museum		Off Limits		Bizarre Foods		Mysteries-Museum
TV LAND	Married	Married	Scrubs	Scrubs	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Roseanne Roseanne
USA	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Covert Affairs		Psych		Burn Notice		
VH1	Basketbal	T.O. Show	Tough Love: Miami		Tough Love: Miami		Still Single?		Basketball Wives LA
WGN	30 Rock	30 Rock	How I Met	How I Met	WGN News at Nine		30 Rock	Scrubs	Sunny
Premium Channels									
HBO	Love & Other Drugs			24/7	Enlighten	Bored	Boardwalk Empire		Ring Life
MAX	Frightnrs	Sister Act		It's Complicated			Skin-Max	Chemistry	
SHOW	Jolene			Dexter		Homeland	Gigolos	Old Porn	

American Profile We Celebrate Hometown Life Stories from hometowns just like yours. Look for us each week in this paper.

HIST	Ancient Aliens	Ancient Aliens	Brad Meltzer's Dec.	Brad Meltzer's Dec.	Ancient Aliens
LIFE	Unsolved Mysteries	The Alphabet Killer		Cold Case Files	Unsolved Mysteries
MTV	Chelsea	Chelsea	The Real World	The Real World	Beavis Good Vibe
NICK	SpongeBot	SpongeBot	70s Show	70s Show	George George
SCI	Ghost Hunters	Ghost Hunters	Fact or Faked	Fact or Faked	Ghost Hunters
SPIKE	UFC Unleashed	UFC Unleashed	The Ultimate Fighter		BlueMount BlueMount
TBS	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Conan
TCM	Niagara		Some Like It Hot		Girl Can't Help
TLC	Medium	Medium	Extreme C	Extreme C	Extreme C
TNT	The Mentalist	The Mentalist	The Mentalist	Patriot Games	Preview
TOON	Dude	Destroy	King/Hill	King/Hill	Amer. Dad
TRAV	Man, Food	Man, Food	Man v Fd	Man v Fd	Man, Food
TV LAND	Married	Married	Scrubs	Scrubs	Raymond
USA	NCIS		NCIS		Psych
VH1	Basketball Wives LA	Basketball Wives LA	Basketball Wives LA		Basketball
WGN	30 Rock	30 Rock	How I Met	How I Met	WGN News at Nine
Premium Channels					
HBO	The Rite		America	Boardwalk Empire	Real Time/Bill Maher
MAX	Sex and the City 2			D.O.A.: Dead or Alive	Chemistry
SHOW	Homeland		Inside the NFL	NASCAR	Teller

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