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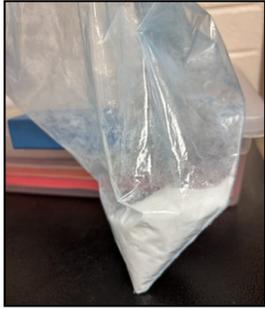
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MCSO Press Release: Substance found at EK Baker School



A McMinn County elementary student brought a powdery substance to EK Baker School Friday morning, and after a quick investigation and testing by school staff and the Sheriff's Office, discovered it contained several controlled substances.

According to Sheriff Joe Guy, School Resource Deputy Charles Shelton was made aware of some students drinking a strange liquid out of a sports drink bottle around 950am. Deputy Shelton and the Assistant Principal responded to the 8th grade classroom and took control of the bottle immediately, and were also able to locate a Ziploc bag of white powdery material in it.

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It was discovered that 2-3 students may have drank some of the substance in the bottle, which it was believed was mixed from the powder in the bag. Additional Sheriff's Officers and School administrators arrived to assist with the incident.

"The student at first claimed it was a powdered laxative," said Sheriff Guy. "Our officers tested it, and the field tests did not show any illicit substance. But out of an abundance of caution, our officers wanted to make sure so they then took it and tested it with a more detailed test with the assistance of the 5th District Drug

Task Force. While this was occurring, our school officials monitored the health of the students involved and notified their parents. The second, more detailed test of the powder the officers undertook, indicated the presence of several controlled substances, such as Cocaine, Xylazine, and Methamphetamine."

The Sheriff's Office, along with School administrators, advised the parents of the students involved to seek immediate medical examinations as Xylazine is an extremely dangerous substance." Sheriff Guy added that he is not currently aware that any of the students who may have had contact with the substance becoming ill, nor having any other health problems related to the incident. **Morning Fax**
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We will be conducting further testing of the powder at the TBI crime lab, to confirm exactly what it is," said Sheriff Guy. "And we are working closely with our School Administrators, Department of Children Services, and the Drug Task Force to ensure the safety of our students and to conduct a thorough criminal investigation as to the source of where the substance came from."

A search and investigation at the students residence indicated that the substance may in fact be a powdered laxative, but may have been placed in a bag that was previously used for the xylazine and other drugs. Subsequent testing by the TBI will help make a correct determination.

"I truly appreciate the quick action of our responding officers and our school officials in what could have been a much more serious situation," said Sheriff Guy. "And we want to encourage parents to tell their kids: don't eat or drink things from anyone unless a trusted adult says its OK."

Press Release via Joe Guy, Sheriff, McMinn County

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- Friday-Sweetwater-Little Drugs-10:30 - 2:30

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Athens, Tennessee

Community News You Can Use

- The City of Athens Planning Commission meeting for Monday, April 7 has been cancelled due to no agenda items being presented at last week's work session.
- The Athens Municipal Building, Public Works, and Animal Shelter will be closed on Friday, April 18, in observance of Good Friday. The Recycle Center will also be closed on Saturday, April 19. The Municipal Building, Public Works, Recycle Center and Animal Shelter will re-open on Monday, April 21 during regular business hours. The residential garbage route for Friday, April 18 will be picked up on Monday, April 21. All other residential Morning Fax garbage routes will be on a regular schedule. Commercial/Industrial garbage routes will be picked up on a limited basis. All EMS services will continue on a 24-hour basis. For more information, please contact Public Works at 423-744-2745.
- There will be an Easter Egg Hunt at the Athens VFW on Saturday, April 19 at Noon. The Easter Bunny will be present and there will be prizes for each age group. Refreshments will be served after the hunt.

Athens City Council to Discuss Light Show, Infrastructure, and Board Seats



Today, Monday, April 7 at 5:00 p.m., the Athens City Council will hold a work session at the Municipal Building's Burkett L. Witt Council Chambers. The meeting, which begins with an invocation and pledge of allegiance, will cover a wide range of topics. Key items include awarding a proposal for NoogaLights, LLC to host a drive-through Christmas light

show at Regional Park and a bid award for the mowing and maintenance of three city-owned cemeteries. Council members will also discuss various projects such as City Hall updates, a splash pad at Cook Park, and a comprehensive storm water improvement project led by Gresham Smith Engineers.

Additional items on the agenda feature proposals to amend city codes to increase the number of retail liquor stores, construct a new sidewalk on W. Madison, and other infrastructure projects like resurfacing several streets. The session will also address property disposal at Regional Park and review a presentation of the FYE 2024 Morning Fax audit. In new business, appointments and vacancies will be discussed for several boards and committees, including the Board of Adjustment & Appeals, the Tax Equalization Board, the Athens Regional Planning Commission, and the Council Advisory Committee.



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Monday, April 7, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Sheriff warns of new "Federal Agent" scam

A McMinn County man lost tens of thousands of dollars in a recent scam where he received a call from a scammer posing as a Federal agent.

According to Sheriff Joe Guy, an elderly man reported that he had been contacted around the middle of March on a phone call from an individual who claimed to be an agent with US Customs and Border Patrol. The "agent" told the victim that a large amount of money and drugs had been seized at the southern US border that included information connecting the victim to the drugs and money. The victim was told that unless he paid a deposit of money, the US government would "freeze all of his assets".

"The elderly victim is currently caring for a sick spouse, so was very vulnerable. The scammer even sent him a photo of an actual Customs Agent, along with a picture of a Federal ID. It was very convincing," said Morning Fax Sheriff Guy. "The scammer kept the victim on the phone as he went to several banks and withdrew a large amount of cash, which under the direction of the scammer, he placed in a shoe box. It was then that the incident became very disturbing."

According to Sheriff Guy, a separate scammer came to the victim's driveway in what he described as a black sedan and took the shoebox of money.

"That was something we've not seen before," said Sheriff Guy. "But we have since discovered through the FBI that a similar scam involving a scammer coming to a residence and picking up money has occurred in other locations such as Kentucky and Louisiana."

Sheriff Guy stated that while his officers continue to look into the matter, such cases are extremely difficult to prosecute and get money back to the victims.

"The scammers have call centers, often in other countries. They are calling the victim from there while at the same time employing a "bag man" who drives to the area where the victim lives and picks up the money.

Sheriff Guy said victims are often taken in because the scammer seems to know so much about them. He and other authorities believe that when information is stolen from computer records at places such as hospitals, retirement systems, and other businesses the information like names, addresses, and social security numbers is sold to scammers, who use the information to pretend they know everything about the victim.

"We've seen variations of this scam where the caller or email claims it is from Customs and Border Patrol, the US Attorney General's Office, FBI, IRS, and other Federal agencies," said Sheriff Guy. "I've seen many smart people drawn in by these scams and lose thousands upon thousands of dollars."

Sheriff Guy wants people to be aware and do the following if you receive a similar call or email:

1. Hang up and call local law enforcement immediately. Local authorities can often tell a person immediately if they are being scammed. If you are elderly, you should also notify a family member.
2. No Federal, state, or local agencies ask for money or payment of fines over the phone. Do not give money or personal information out until you have spoken to law enforcement.
3. Do not continue to speak to the caller or e-mailer. The more you engage them, the greater risk you have of being scammed.

"Every citizen receives these calls, especially elderly citizens. I've gotten the Border Patrol call myself, among others. I don't trust any phone call or email, and even the ones that seem believable I check on with someone else, just to be sure. We need to be looking out for each other, because the scammers don't care."

Press Release via Joe Guy, Sheriff, McMinn County Morning Fax

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Athens, Tennessee

Driver Uninjured in Rollover Crash on State Highway 307

AFD Conducts Extrication Training for Emergency Preparedness



A 1998 Jeep Wrangler Sahara overturned after leaving the roadway on Highway 307 near County Road 350 in Sweetwater around 3 p.m. Saturday. The driver escaped without injury.



The Athens Fire Department recently held an extrication training exercise aimed at enhancing the life-saving skills of its firefighters. The hands-on session focused on rescuing individuals from vehicles involved in accidents, using specialized tools and techniques to safely and efficiently remove trapped occupants.



The training ensures that firefighters are fully prepared to respond to real-life emergency situations, emphasizing the

Responding agencies included Niota Rural Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, AMR, the McMinn County Sheriff's Department, and THP Trooper Rodney Best, who is investigating the incident.

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Photo courtesy of Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural Fire Department.

department's commitment to continuous education and public safety. Through ongoing training, the department aims to improve response times and ensure the highest level of service for the community.

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Source: [City of Athens - Facebook](#)

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Athens, Tennessee

Vols Drop Doubleheader to Texas A&M, Snap SEC Series Win Streak



It was a rough Saturday for No. 1 Tennessee, as the Volunteers dropped both games of a doubleheader to Texas A&M at Lindsey Nelson Stadium, ending a program-record streak of 12 straight SEC series wins.

After a dominant no-hitter on Friday, Tennessee (28-4, 9-3 SEC) was overwhelmed by an offensive explosion from the Aggies (16-15, 3-9 SEC), who combined for 26 runs and 11 home runs over the two games.

Game 1: Texas A&M 9, Tennessee 3

The Aggies broke through in the middle innings and never looked back, launching four home runs and scoring in five straight frames. Vols pitcher Marcus Phillips took his first loss of the season, while Chris Newstrom went 2-for-3 to lead Tennessee at the plate.

Game 2: Texas A&M 17, Tennessee 6 (8 Inn.)

Texas A&M carried the momentum into the nightcap, slugging seven homers—including two each from Wyatt Henseler and Ben Royo—to run-rule the Vols in eight innings. Tennessee showed brief life with a three-run homer by Hunter Ensley but couldn't recover from the early deficit.

Tegan Kuhns and Brayden Krenzler both struggled on the mound, while Newstrom again stood out offensively with another multi-hit performance.

What's Next

Tennessee will try to bounce back against Alabama State on Tuesday night before heading to Ole Miss for a key SEC road series next weekend.

Source: UTSports.com

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Monday, April 7, 2025

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Athens, Tennessee

Obituaries

Mike Russell, 69 of McMinn County, passed away on Thursday, April 3. Visitation will be held at Ziegler Funeral Home from 5:00 until 7:00 PM on Friday, April 11 with a memorial service to follow at 7:00 PM. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with serving the family of Mike Russell.

Margaret "Louise" Wallace Womac, 89 of McMinn County, passed away on Friday, April 4. She was a longtime member of East Athens Baptist Church. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, April 9 from 12:00-2:00 PM at Ziegler Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 2:00 PM at the funeral home with interment to follow at Cedar Grove Cemetery. Ziegler Funeral Home has been entrusted with serving the family of Margaret "Louise" Wallace Womac.

Margaret "Bonnie" Carter, 90 of Sweetwater, passed away on Friday, April 4 at the University of Tennessee Medical Center. Bonnie was an animal lover and especially loved her cats. There will be no formal services at this time. She will be buried at Forkners Chapel Cemetery. Compan-

ion Funeral & Cremation Service of Athens, TN and the Cody family are honored to assist the family with these arrangements.

Charles "Eddie" Moates, 82, of Etowah, TN passed away on Thursday, April 3. Eddie retired from Bowater after 40 years. He was a member of North Etowah Baptist Church. Eddie served in the Army for two years. A memorial service will be held at 7:00 p.m., Monday, April 7 in the chapel of Bordwine Funeral Home. Family will receive friends from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., Monday prior to the service. Bordwine Funeral Home of Etowah is in charge of arrangements.

Jessie Marie Bunch Swafford, 86, passed away on Wednesday, March 26 at her home, with her family by her side. She was a faithful member of Bethel Springs Baptist Church. A celebration of Jessie's life will be held at Bethel Springs Baptist Church on Saturday, April 12 at 2:30 pm. Decatur Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to serve the Swafford Family.

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