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Inside C5

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

Thursday, January 4, 2017

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Southern News Group

## 'Bombogenesis' takes aim at U.S. Northeast as South hit by snow

CHARLESTON, S.C./BOSTON (Reuters) - A rare winter storm hit the U.S. Southeast on Wednesday, bringing Florida's capital its first snow in three decades and snarling travel, while New England braced for a "bombogenesis" blizzard forecast to bring heavy accumulations on Thursday.

The governors of Florida, Georgia and North Carolina declared states of emergency, warning residents to expect icy roads and unseasonable freezing temperatures. Florida opened warming shelters for residents.

At least nine people have died in the record-low temperatures that have gripped much of the United States for the past few days, officials said. Police in Roseville, Michigan, on Wednesday said a 96-year-old woman, who had recently been diagnosed with dementia, was found lying dead in a playground, apparently having frozen to death after wandering outside in a robe and slippers.

The U.S. National Weather Service had blizzard warnings in effect from Virginia to Maine, with areas around Boston expected to see about a foot (30 cm) of snow on Thursday. Forecasters warned that snow would fall quickly, at a rate of several inches per hour, during the day, with the storm intensified by the "bombogenesis" effect, according to private forecaster Accuweather.

In historic Charleston, South Carolina, the winter storm shuttered carriage horse tour companies on Wednesday, city spokesman Jack O'Toole said. A

day earlier, a carriage horse slipped and fell on a patch of ice during a tour.

Residents in nearby Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, on Tuesday headed to grocery stores in droves to stock up on food and supplies at local groceries, according to Nicholas Nichols, an employee at Publix grocery store.

"They did restock last night. They were here until 4 in the morning," Nichols said.

The wintry mix and low wind chills could cause widespread power outages and leave roads icy, making commuting treacherous for millions of Americans from northern Florida to southern Virginia, the National Weather Service said in a series of warnings.

Many flights out of the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport in Georgia and Tallahassee Airport in Florida were canceled.

Pedestrians stop to look at the frozen Josephine Shaw Lowell Memorial Fountain in New York, January 3, 2018. REUTERS/Lucas Jackson

The weather service said its Tallahassee office measured a snow and sleet accumulation of 0.1 inch (2.5 mm) on its roof, the first time Florida's capital has had snow since 1989. Two to 3 inches (5-8 cm) of snow were expected in northeastern Florida, coastal Georgia and South Carolina, said weather service meteorologist Bob Oravec.

Boston Mayor Marty Walsh ordered schools closed on Thursday, warning



A woman stops to photograph the frozen Josephine Shaw Lowell Memorial Fountain in New York

city residents that the peak of the storm would occur during the day, making travel extremely dangerous. "Both rush hours will be affected," Walsh told a news conference. "Be patient. With the amount of snow we're getting here, we could be plowing your street and a half hour later it could look like we haven't been there."

The "bombogenesis" effect, also known as a "bomb cyclone," was

first described in a 1980 scientific paper by the late Fred Sanders, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It occurs when a storm's barometric pressure drops by 24 millibars in 24 hours, greatly strengthening the storm. The effect is seen along the northeastern coast every winter, but this storm will be particularly powerful, said Judah Cohen, a visiting scientist at MIT.

"This one is unique in how quickly the pressure is going to fall," Cohen said. "The pressures could rival a Category 1 or Category 2 hurricane." Some coastal areas of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia could ultimately receive up to 6 inches (15 cm) of snow and ice. An arctic air mass will remain entrenched over the eastern two-thirds of the United States through the end of the week.

## U.S. gasoline spending expected to rise \$25B in 2018

U.S. spending on gasoline is expected to rise by \$25 billion this year with fuel prices hitting their highest sustained prices in four years, according to annual projections.

The nation is expected to average \$2.57 for a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline in 2018, up from last year's \$2.39 average because of higher global oil prices and rising demand, says GasBuddy's 2018 outlook.

The Houston area would average close to \$2.30 for the year if those projections hold, with Houston peaking as high as \$2.65 in the

more expensive spring and summer months. That's a full \$1 a gallon less than the highest projected peak in Los Angeles.

The U.S. oil price benchmark finished 2017 above \$60 a barrel for the first time since the summer of 2015, and some pricing consistency is expected because of OPEC nation's and Russia agreeing to maintain production cuts through 2018. Because gasoline is refined from crude oil, fuel prices typically follow oil trends.

Houston-area fuel prices kicked off January 2018 at an average of \$2.20

a gallon with the national price at \$2.48.

Total U.S. spending on gasoline is projected to rise 7.5 percent from 2017 to nearly \$365 billion. That's still below the 12 percent jump in spending from 2016 to 2017.

Such projections mean the average U.S. household would spend roughly \$1,900 on gasoline in 2018, up \$133 from last year, according to GasBuddy.

That's the most expensive gasoline average since 2014, but still well below the \$3 a gallon and above fuel costs from when oil prices hovered above \$100 a barrel.



FILE PHOTO: People fuel their cars at a Citgo gas station in Kearny, New Jersey

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Like many Portland residents, Satish and Arlene Palshikar are serious recyclers. Their house is coated with recycled bluish-white paint. They recycle their rainwater, compost their food waste and carefully separate the paper and plastic they toss out. But recently, after loading up their Prius and driving to a sorting facility, they got a shock.



**China's ban means recycling is piling up at Rogue Waste System in southern Oregon. Employees Scott Fowler, Laura Leebrick and Garry Penning say their only option for now is to send it to a landfill. (Courtesy EarthFix)**

"The fellow said we don't take plastic anymore," Satish says. "It should go in the trash."

The facility had been shipping its plastic to China, but suddenly that was no longer possible.

The U.S. exports about one-third of its recycling, and nearly half goes to China. For decades, China has used recyclables from around the world to supply its manufacturing boom. But this summer it declared that this "foreign waste" includes too many other nonrecyclable materials that are "dirty," even "hazardous." In a filing with the World Trade Organization the country listed 24 kinds of solid wastes it would ban "to protect China's environmental interests and people's health."

The complete ban takes effect Jan. 1, but already some Chinese importers have not had their licenses renewed. That is leaving U.S. recycling companies scrambling to adapt. "It has no value ... It's garbage."

Rogue Waste Systems in southern Oregon collects recycling from curbside bins, and manager Scott Fowler says there are always nonrecyclables mixed in. As mounds of goods are compressed into 1-ton bales, he points out some: a roll of linoleum, gas cans, a briefcase, a surprising number of knitted sweaters. Plus, there are the frozen food cartons and plastic bags that many people think are recyclable but are not.

**Customs officers check on imported solid waste**



### Many Countries Have Imported Plastic Waste To China And Hong Kong For Many Years. Starting In 2018, China Will Ban The Import Of This Waste.

## China's Ban On 'Foreign Waste' Causes Recycling Chaos In U.S.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

at an examination centre in Qingdao, Shandong province, October 15, 2013. China's ban on solid waste imports has thrown U.S. waste recyclers into state of chaos. (Courtesy China Daily/Reuters)

For decades, China has sorted through all this and used the recycled goods to propel its manufacturing boom. Now it no longer wants to, so the materials sit here with no place to go.

"It just keeps coming and coming and coming," says Rogue employee Laura Leebrick. In the warehouse, she is dwarfed by stacks of orphaned recycling bales. Outside, employee parking spaces have been taken over by compressed cubes of sour cream containers, broken wine bottles and junk mail.

And what are recyclables with nowhere to go?

"Right now, by definition, that material out there is garbage," she says. "It has no value. There is no demand for it in the marketplace. It's garbage."

For now, Rogue Waste says it has no choice but to take all of this recycling to the local landfill. More than a dozen Oregon companies have asked regulators whether they can send recyclable materials to landfills, and that number may grow if they can't find somewhere else that wants them.

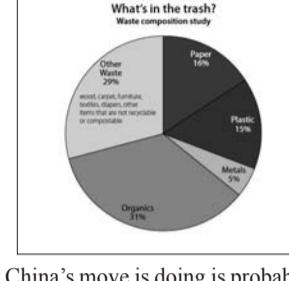
At Pioneer Recycling in Portland, owner Steve Frank is shopping for new buyers outside of China.

"I've personally moved material to different countries in an effort to keep material flowing," he says.

Without Chinese buyers, Frank says U.S. recycling companies are playing a game of musical chairs, and the music stops when China's ban on waste imports fully kicks in. "The rest of the world cannot make up that gap," he said. "That's where we have what I call a bit of chaos going on."

Adina Adler, a senior director with the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, says China's new standards are

nearly impossible to meet. The group is trying to persuade China to walk back its demanding target for how clean our recycling exports need to be. But Adler doesn't think China's decision is all bad.



What China's move is doing is probably ushering in a new era of recycling," she says.

### A helping (mechanical) hand

Bulk Handling Systems is betting that robots can be the future of recycling. At its research facility, bits of waste pass by on a conveyor belt as robotic arms poke down, sucking up plastic bags and water bottles then dropping them into bins.

CEO Steve Miller says the robot uses cameras and artificial intelligence to separate recycling from trash "in the same way that a person would do it," but faster and more accurately.

"It actually moves at a rate of 80 picks per minute," he says. "A person might only get 30 picks per minute."

Miller believes technology like this could let the U.S. make its recycling clean enough for China. But the robots are expensive, and few companies have them.

### Trash being recycled on automated conveyor belt.

For now, the best bet may come back to the curbside bin.

Recycling companies are considering changing the rules for what's allowed in them or adding an additional bin for paper only to help streamline the sorting process. Steve Frank says Pioneer Recycling is even looking into adding cameras to collection trucks to catch people putting trash in their recycling bins. (Courtesy <https://www.npr.org/>)

### Related

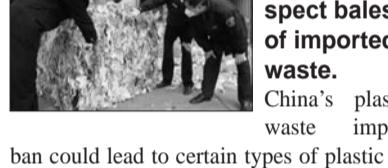
#### China Is Officially Enacting a Plastic Waste Import Ban

For years, the world has imported plastic waste to China and Hong Kong. In a recent development, China will ban the import of this waste starting in 2018.

### PLASTIC WASTE

Starting in January, China's government is enacting a plastic waste import ban, in an attempt to cut down on millions of tons of plastic and other recyclables they receive every year. This change may drastically affect how the world recycles and disposes of waste.

The Guardian reports that, according to an analysis of customs data by Greenpeace, British companies alone have imported over 2.7 million tons of plastic waste to China and Hong Kong since 2012. According to Industry Week, China accepted 51 percent of global plastic scrap imports in 2016. The biggest chunk of that trash came from the US, where the majority of "recycled" plastics are actually shipped abroad to then be recycled; as such, trash has actually become one of the US's biggest exports. Europe, Hong Kong, Japan and Southeast Asia ship their recyclables to China as well. All of this trash has historically been used to fuel China's manufacturing industry.



**Chinese authorities inspect bales of imported waste.**

China's plastic waste import

ban could lead to certain types of plastic no longer being collected, and it has the potential to increase environmental pollution. Quartz reports that this is already happening elsewhere: due to a Chinese ban on certain plastics enacted in 2013, Oregon recycling centers have stopped accepting the plastic "clamshells" that hold berries, as well as hospital gowns and plastic bags; in Olympia, Washington, plastic bags are no longer accepted; and central California built a new recycling center simply to keep up with agri-

cultural plastics that had nowhere else to go.

### RETHINKING POLLUTION

So, where will our waste go when China stops importing it? Action will need to come soon: in Hong Kong, mountains of paper waste that would normally go to China have been piling up since a July ban on 24 types of "foreign garbage." That ban is already driving up the prices of paper products. A paper mill manager in southern China told Reuters in September that the price of finished paper had doubled as a result, from 3,000 yuan (US \$453) per ton to 6,000 yuan (\$906) per ton. Stuart Foster from Recoup, the UK's national charity for developing plastics recycling, told The Guardian that there were inklings of possible import restrictions years ago. However, there was no action taken in the UK. This is despite the fact that, Foster says, that this could be an opportunity for the UK to create their own plastics infrastructure, which could add to the economy.



### **China no longer wants trash from the U.S. and other countries.**

The plastic pollution problem is especially bad in the oceans, as seen from the marine debris accumulated on a beach of the remote island of Kaho'olawe in Hawaii. (Image credit: NOAA)

But while government officials worldwide consider how to move forward after China's plastic waste import ban, the main focus has to be on the environment. This ban may undo the decades-long effort to build a plastics recycling industry, and lead to even more plastics being produced; IndustryWeek reports that China has already begun investing in brand new plastic to replace what they're no longer recycling, to the delight of US chemical companies.

That's especially bad news as plastic waste continues to harm the environment, particularly marine animals. The U.N. has called our plastics problem a "planetary crisis," and action needs to be taken soon. Unless another country steps in to fill the recycling gap China has created, this issue will only get worse.

As Foster told The Guardian, "Whatever happens we need to maintain control of the material because the bigger worry is about leakage of plastic into the environment." (Courtesy <https://futurism.com/>)

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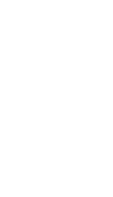
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### **Meet Dr. Li-Min Hwang**



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Dr. Hwang is certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He earned his undergraduate and medical degree from the National Taiwan University College of Medicine in Taipei. He completed residency programs at National Taiwan University Hospital and St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, Penn. In addition, he earned a postgraduate degree of Master of Public Health in maternal and child health from the prestigious Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health in Baltimore, Md. He is a member of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Texas Medical Association and Harris County Medical Society.

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# A Snapshot Of The World



Alpine Skiing - FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup - Women's Slalom - 2nd run - Zagreb, Croatia - January 3, 2018 - Mikaela Shiffrin of the U.S. reacts at the podium after winning the competition.



Pedestrians stop to look at the frozen Josephine Shaw Lowell Memorial Fountain in New York



Students react as water from earthen pitchers is poured on them to take a holy bath during a ceremony organised to resemble the annual month-long Hindu religious festival of Magh Mela, held during the Hindu month of Magh, in Ahmedabad



A South Korean government official checks the direct communications hotline to talk with the North Korean side at the border village of Panmunjom  
NORTHKOREA-MISSILES/



A conservator shows a 2,700-year-old clay seal impression which archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority say belonged to a biblical governor of Jerusalem and was unearthed in excavations in the Western Wall plaza in Jerusalem's Old City



Members of the Berliner Seehunde ice swimmers club take a dip in lake Orankesee during their traditional New Year swimming event in Berlin



A Beijing Opera performer prepares for a countdown event celebrating the new year in Beijing



Revelers brace freezing cold temperatures in Times Square ahead of New Year's celebrations in New York City



Revelers gather in Times Square ahead of the New Year's Eve celebrations in New York

THURSDAY JANUARY 4, 2018

Riyadh (AFP) – Last Monday Saudi Arabia lifted a decades-long ban on cinemas, part of a series of social reforms by the powerful crown prince that are shaking up the ultra-conservative kingdom.

"Commercial cinemas will be allowed to operate in the kingdom as of early 2018, for the first time in more than 35 years," the culture and information ministry said in a statement, adding that the government will begin licensing cinemas immediately. Reviving cinemas would represent a paradigm shift in the kingdom, which is promoting entertainment as part of a sweeping reform plan dubbed "Vision 2030", despite opposition from conservatives.

"This marks a watershed moment in the development of the cultural economy in the kingdom," information minister Awwad Alawwad said in the statement.

Hardliners, who see cinemas as a threat to cultural and religious identity, were instrumental in shutting them down in the 1980s.

Saudi Arabia's highest-ranking cleric warned in January of the "depravity" of cinemas, saying they would corrupt morals.



But authorities appear to be shrugging off the threat.

Saudi filmmakers have long argued that a ban on cinemas does not make sense in the age of YouTube.

Saudi films have been making waves abroad, using the internet to circumvent distribution channels and sometimes the stern gaze of state censors. (Courtesy https://www.yahoo.com)

#### Commentary

##### Saudi Arabia Lifts Ban On Movie Theatres At Last

Saudi Arabia is to have its first public cinemas in more than 35 years, after the government announced on Monday that it was lifting its ban on movie theaters.

The move was announced by the General Commission for Audio-visual Media, chaired by minister of culture and information Dr. Awwad bin Saleh Al-Awwad. According to the government statement,

## Saudi Arabia Government Lifts Decades-Long Ban On Cinemas

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



Saudi women attend a rare cinema screening at a film festival in Riyadh in October 2017. Saudi Arabia on Monday announced a lifting of the kingdom's decades-long ban on cinemas (Photo AFP)

the licensing process for cinema operators will start within 90 days.

It will not be a free-for-all, and the type of films that will be screened is likely to be tightly circumscribed. The Ministry of Culture and Information has said that films "will be subject to censorship according to media policy standards of the kingdom" and in line with its strict social code.

There are several reasons for the changes, not least the hope that the country can develop a stronger cultural and entertainment sector. Music concerts are now

becoming relatively common in Saudi Arabia, and the General Entertainment Authority (GEA) promotes a wide range of events in cities around the country. The development of the domestic leisure industry may persuade Saudis to spend more money inside the kingdom, rather than heading to more liberal cities in the surrounding region, such as Dubai and Manama, the capital of Bahrain. The Saudi government estimates that the cinema sector will contribute more than SR90bn (\$24bn) to the country's economy by 2030, creating 30,000 permanent jobs and 130,000 temporary jobs in the process.

The idea of cinemas being licensed has been floated many times over the years, including in April this year when Ahmed al-Khatib, chairman of the GEA, said: "We'll get there. I know how. I don't know when."

Despite the formal ban, some film festivals have been held in the country in recent years, and local directors have pro-

duced some notable works that have done well internationally, including the 2012 film Wadjda by director Haifaa al-Mansour and, more recently, Barakah Meets Barakah by director Mahmoud Sabbagh.



Saudi women arrive to watch short movies during the Short Film Competition festival at King Fahad Culture

Companies have been keeping a close eye on developments, and many should be ready to quickly take advantage of the latest reform. Shopping mall operator Arabian Malls said earlier this year that it

had allocated space for cinemas in up to 10 malls under development around the country.

UAE-based Majid Al Futtaim also welcomed the latest announcement. In a statement, it said it could mean the creation of thousands of jobs. It is lining up its Vox Cinemas brand to enter the market in the months ahead.

The decision to allow cinemas to reopen is the latest step in a wide-ranging program of reforms currently under way in Saudi Arabia, where locals had to deal with deeply conservative rules imposed as a result of the country's adherence to a strict Wahhabist interpretation of Islam. Among the other recent changes, the government announced in September that women would at last be allowed to drive. More liberal rules have also been mooted for some large new developments, including a Red Sea resort currently being planned on the west coast.

**Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman**



At the forefront of the reform drive is Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, who has been leading a high-profile anti-corruption campaign at home while also being linked to the record-setting \$450m purchase of a Leonardo da Vinci painting abroad. (The Saudi Embassy denied that Prince Mohammed was involved, suggesting in a statement that the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism had acquired the work by using another Saudi prince as an intermediary purchaser.) (Courtesy forbes.com)

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## 容永騏醫學博士心臟專科

STEVEN Y. YONG M.D., Ph.D., F.A.C.C.  
★ 美國心臟學會院士  
★ 美國心臟超聲波學會特考文憑  
★ 美國心臟核醫學學會特考文憑

主治：各種心臟、血管疾病及高膽固醇血症

門診時間：星期一至星期五 (9:00am 至 5:00pm)

9440 Bellaire Blvd, #102  
Houston TX 77036

地 址

門診時間

門診地址

Thursday, January 4, 2017

## Day cares across the Houston area



Parents leave their children at day care with the expectation that they will not be hit, yelled at or dragged across the floor.

Unfortunately, at licensed centers across the Houston area, these and other violations have been documented over the last year.

The State of Texas offers

the public a useful online tool for checking out a day care center's history of violations. Parents can check Texas state inspectors' reports for day care centers, which are available online.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services regularly inspects licensed childcare centers and in-home child care operations, reporting violations ranging from missing background checks to inappropriate punishments and neglect.

When a violation is found, or an incident is reported, it is listed as a deficiency on the state DFPS website for two years.

Some day care centers have self-reported incidents to the state, and in many cases childcare workers have been terminated after a serious incident.

The reports in the slideshow above compile state violations from various parts of Houston in the past 12 months. The slideshow is updated periodically to include violations.



Omni Houston Hotel at Westside

Address: 13210 Katy Freeway

Prostitution arrests connected to location: 27

## Texas spa still has license after multiple prostitution charges

A Texas spa still has its business license, despite having numerous employees who have been arrested and charged with prostitution-related crimes.

On Dec. 29, The Bryan Police Department arrested Fan Zhang, 48, at Rose Spa and Lina Ashford, 49, at Chi Massage on charges of prostitution. According to news station KBTX-TV, seven employees of



Motel 6 Houston  
Address: 2900 W Sam Houston Pkwy S  
Prostitution arrests connected to location: 23

the parlors have been arrested in the last two years on prostitution charges.

The news station reports the parlors were allegedly soliciting customers via Craigslist and Backpage. Officers brought recording devices with them and captured the women allegedly agreeing to illegal acts.

A weeklong undercover investigation led to 277 arrests related to human trafficking and online prostitution, deputies in Polk County say.

A weeklong undercover investigation led to 277 arrests related to human trafficking and online prostitution, deputies in Polk County say.

Despite the arrests, Rose Spa still has a valid license from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. Chi Massage did not have a

license listed on the department's website on Wednesday.

Shane Phelps, legal analyst for KBTX-TV, told the news station that he doesn't think the department has many resources for shutting down businesses. He adds that the business could be shut down if the city declares it a public nuisance or if the landlord decides to kick them out. The Eagle newspaper reports Zhang and Ashford did not tell police if they were forced into prostitution. Police add they didn't find any suspects who seem to be overseeing the women.

As of Wednesday, Zhang was listed in the Brazos County Jail and has a U.S. immigration hold. Ashford is out on bond, according to jail records.

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李楠

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