

# Gas stations report shortages as pipeline shutdown drags on

## Hackers' cyberattack on May 7 hit nation's biggest fuel pipeline

By **CATHY BUSSEWITZ**, **JEFF AMY** and **BOBBY CAINA CALVAN**  
Associated Press

CHAMBLEE, Ga. — More than 1,000 gas stations in the Southeast reported running out of fuel, primarily because of what analysts say is unwarranted panic-buying among drivers, as the shutdown of a major pipeline by a gang of hackers entered its fifth day Tuesday, May 11.

Government officials acted swiftly to waive safety and environmental rules to speed the delivery of fuel by truck, ship or rail to motorists and airports, even as they sought to assure the public that there was no cause for alarm.

The Colonial Pipeline, the biggest fuel pipeline in the U.S., delivering about 45% of what is consumed on the East Coast, was hit May 7 with a cyber-attack by hackers who lock up computer systems and demand a ransom to release them. The attack raised concerns, once again, about the vulnerability of the nation's critical infrastructure.

A large part of the pipeline resumed operations manually late May 10,

and Colonial anticipates restarting most of its operations by the end of the week, U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said.

Motorists may still feel a crunch because it takes a few days to ramp up operations, but she said there is no reason to hoard gasoline.

"We know that we have gasoline; we just have to get it to the right places," she said.

S&P's Oil Price Information Service put the number of gas stations encountering shortages at more than 1,000.

"A lot of that is because they're selling three or four times as much gasoline that they normally sell in a given day, because people do panic," said Tom Kloza, an analyst with S&P. "It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy."

The pipeline runs from the Texas Gulf Coast to the New York metropolitan area. The states most dependent on the pipeline include Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee and the Carolinas, Kloza said.

In Virginia, 7.7% of the state's nearly 3,900 gas stations reported running out of fuel May 11, according



Chris Carlson/Associated Press

A customer helps pumping gas at Costco, as other wait in line, on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, in Charlotte, North Carolina. Colonial Pipeline, which delivers about 45% of the fuel consumed on the East Coast, halted operations last week after revealing a cyberattack that it said had affected some of its systems.

to Gasbuddy.com, which tracks supply. In North Carolina, 8.5% of almost 5,400 stations were out, the company said.

There were scattered reports of higher gasoline prices, but prices were rising even before the pipeline incident heading into the busy summer driving season. Nevertheless, Granholm warned gas station owners, "We will have no tolerance for price gouging."

To ease brief shortages,

the White House is considering temporarily waiving a law that says ships delivering products between U.S. ports must be built and manned by Americans.

The Transportation Department also is relaxing some workforce requirements and enlisting railroads to deliver fuel inland. And the Environmental Protection Agency lifted some fuel quality requirements on an emergency basis.

"We're looking at every

option we have across the federal government and all of the federal agencies," Granholm said.

In Georgia, Gov. Brian Kemp suspended state taxes on motor fuels through May 15. Georgia collects a gasoline tax of 28.7 cents per gallon and a diesel tax of 32.2 cents per gallon.

"It will probably help level the price at the pump off for a little while," Kemp said.

However, he urged people not to hoard gaso-

line, saying he expects the situation to be resolved soon.

"You don't need to go out and fill up every 5-gallon can you've got," the governor said.

Scattered gas stations in metro Atlanta were out of fuel May 10 and 11. In Georgia, nearly 6% of about 6,400 stations had run out of fuel, Gasbuddy.com said.

In Florida, drivers in some areas faced long lines, and 3% of gas stations had run out.

The state's governor, Ron DeSantis, declared a state of emergency May 11 in response to the gasoline. The move activates the Florida National Guard, as needed, and directs state emergency management officials to work with federal and local officials.

Dave Gussack drove from one station to the next in Tallahassee, Florida, in search of gas, seeing a line nearly a mile long at the pumps outside a Costco. He eventually passed a station with gas on the way to Florida State University where he works.

"This is insane," he said.

Irena Yanava's tank was about half full, but she wasn't about to take chances as she sat in her car at the same Tallahassee gas station.

"I know that I'll be needing it soon, so why

# Judge dismisses NRA bankruptcy case

By **JAKE BLEIBERG** and **MICHAEL R. SISAK**  
Associated Press

DALLAS — A federal judge dismissed the National Rifle Association's bankruptcy case Tuesday, May 11, leaving the powerful gun-rights group to face a New York state lawsuit that accuses it of financial abuses and aims to put it out of business.

The judge was tasked with deciding whether the NRA should be allowed to incorporate in Texas instead of New York, where the state is suing in an effort to disband the group. Though headquartered in Virginia, the NRA was chartered as a nonprofit in New York in 1871 and is incorporated in the state.

Judge Harlin Hale said in a written order that he was dismissing the case because he found the bankruptcy was not filed in good faith.

"The Court believes the NRA's purpose in filing bankruptcy is less like a traditional bankruptcy case in which a debtor is faced with financial difficulties or a judgment that it cannot satisfy and more like cases in which courts have found bankruptcy was filed to gain an unfair advantage in litigation or to avoid a regulatory scheme," Hale wrote.

His decision followed 11 days of testimony and arguments. Lawyers for New York and the NRA's former advertising agency grilled the group's embattled top executive, Wayne LaPierre, who acknowledged put-



Jose Luis Magana/Associated Press, File

National Rifle Association Executive Vice President and CEO Wayne LaPierre speaks Feb. 29, 2020, at a conference. Federal Judge Harlin Hale announced his decision Tuesday, May 11, 2021, to dismiss the NRA's bankruptcy case, after 11 days of testimony and arguments. Lawyers grilled LaPierre, who acknowledged putting the NRA into Chapter 11 bankruptcy without the knowledge or assent of most of its board and other top officers.

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"Excluding so many people from the process of deciding to file for bankruptcy, including the vast majority of the board of directors, the chief financial officer, and the general counsel, is nothing less than shocking," the judge added.

LaPierre pledged in a statement to continue to fight for gun rights.

"Although we are disappointed in some aspects of the decision, there is no change in the overall direction of our Association, its programs, or its Second Amendment advocacy," LaPierre said via the NRA's Twitter account. "Today is ultimately about

our members — those who stand courageously with the NRA in defense of constitutional freedom. We remain an independent organization that can chart its own course, even as we remain in New York to confront our adversaries."

Lawyers for New York Attorney General Letitia James argued that the case was an attempt by NRA leadership to escape accountability for using the group's coffers as their personal piggybank. But the NRA's attorneys said it was a legitimate effort to avoid a political attack by James, who is a Democrat.

LaPierre testified that he kept the bankruptcy largely secret to prevent leaks from the group's 76-member board, which is divided in its support for him.

Hale dismissed the NRA's case without prejudice, meaning the group can refile it. However, he warned that in doing so the NRA's leaders would risk losing control.

The judge wrote that if the case is refiled, he would immediately take up "concerns about disclosure, transparency, secrecy, conflicts of interest" between NRA officials and their bankruptcy legal team. He said that the lawyers "unusual involvement" in the NRA's affairs raised concerns that the group "could not fulfill the fiduciary duty" and might lead him to appoint a trustee to oversee it.

The NRA declared bankruptcy in January, five months after James' office sued seeking its dissolution following allegations that executives illegally diverted tens of millions of dollars for lavish personal trips, no-show contracts and other questionable expenditures.

James is New York's chief law enforcement officer and has regulatory power over nonprofit organizations incorporated in the state. She sued the NRA last August, saying at the time that the "breadth and the depth of the corruption and the illegality" at the NRA justified its closure. James took similar action to force the closure of former President Donald Trump's charitable foundation after alleging he used it to advance business and political interests.

# U.S. job openings soar to highest level on record

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**  
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers posted a record number of available jobs in March, illustrating starkly the desperation of businesses trying to find new workers as the country emerges from the pandemic and the economy expands.

Yet total job gains increased only modestly, according to a Labor Department report issued Tuesday, May 11. The figures follow an April jobs report last week that was far weaker than expected, largely because companies appear unable to find the workers they need, even with the unemployment rate elevated at 6.1%.

Job openings rose nearly 8%, to 8.1 million in March, the most on records dating back to December 2000, the government said. Yet overall hiring that month rose less than 4% to 6 million. The hiring number is a gross figure, while the government's jobs report — which said 770,000 jobs were added in March — uses a net total. Tuesday's report is known as the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, or JOLTS.

A separate survey of small businesses by the National Federation of Independent Business found that 44% had jobs they couldn't fill, also a record high.

The NFIB and JOLTS "add to evidence from the April employment report that labor shortages are widespread, pushing up prices and potentially acting as a brake on the recovery," said Michael Pearce, an economist at Capital Economics.

Job postings rose in most industries, including restaurants, bars and hotels; manufacturing; construction; and retail. They fell in health care and transportation and warehousing.

The enormous number of openings will likely add fuel to a political dispute about whether the extra \$300 in weekly federal unemployment aid, on top of a state payment that averages about \$320, is discouraging those out of work from seeking new jobs. Many Republicans in Congress have argued that it is, and several states have threatened to cut off the \$300 payments.

President Joe Biden, who included the extra money in his \$1.9 trillion rescue package approved in March, disputed that the \$300 supplemental payment is to blame. But he also urged the Labor Department to work with states on renewing requirements that those receiving aid must search for jobs and take a position if offered. The job search rule was suspended during the pandemic.

# Leigh Perkins, of Orvis fame, dies at 93

By **WILSON RING**  
Associated Press

The man who transformed the Vermont-based Orvis company from a niche fly-fishing supply company into a global retailer of outdoor supplies, apparel and protector of the environment has died. Leigh H. Perkins was 93.

The Sunderland-based Orvis company says Perkins died May 7 in Monticello, Florida. The cause of

death was not released.

An online tribute published on the company's website said Perkins was a lifelong outdoorsman who hunted or fished more than 250 days a year into his 90s who had a reverence for nature and conservation.

The company says that Perkins began donating 5% of pre-tax profits to conserving fish and wildlife.

While Orvis is based in Sunderland, not far

from the headwaters of the Batten Kill — one of the most famous trout streams in the state — the company's reach goes across the world.

"He followed that fly rod to all corners of the world and he made connections and relationships to both places and people across the globe," Simon Perkins, Leigh Perkins' grandson and the current president of Orvis, said Tuesday, May 11.

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