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Newsday

SPORTS FINAL
YOUR EYE ON LI


HI 74° LO 70°
SHOWERS LIKELY

AFTER ISAIAS

'OVERWHELMING'



■ More than 100,000
LIers remain
without power

■ Frustration mounts
over downed wires,
trees and blocked roads

■ LIPA to launch
independent review of
PSEG storm response

A2-4 | VIDEO AND UPDATES AT [NEWSDAY.COM](https://www.newsday.com)

HOWARD SCHNAPP

NRA NY attorney general seeks to dissolve gun
group over allegation of diverted funds **A5**

SCHOOLS Cuomo says reopening decision will be
made on region-by-region basis **A6**

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LONG ISLAND'S COVID-19
ATTITUDES ABOUT SCHOOL



Today! August 7, 2020 • 12 noon

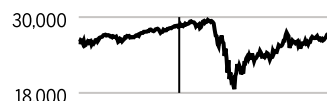
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DOW JONES

185.46 to 27,386.98

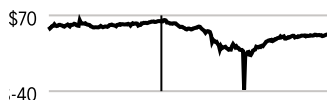
Over the past year:



CRUDE OIL

\$-0.24 to \$41.95

Over the past year:



STOCKS INSPIRED BY LAYOFF SLOWDOWN

Stocks perked higher on Wall Street Thursday after a report showed the pace of layoffs across the country is slowing, though it remains incredibly high.

The S&P 500 rose 21.39, or 0.6%, to 3,349.16, as investors also waited for Congress and the White House to reach a hoped-for deal on more aid for the economy. It was the fifth straight gain for the index, which now hangs just 1.1% below its record set in February. Early in the spring, when panic about the pandemic was at its height, the S&P 500 had been down nearly 34%.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 185.46, or 0.7%, to 27,386.98 after it and other indexes waffled between smaller gains and losses for much of the day. The Nasdaq composite rose 109.67, or 1%, to 11,108.07 and set another record.

The day's headline economic report showed that nearly 1.2 million workers applied for unemployment benefits last week. It would have been an astounding number before the coronavirus pandemic leveled the economy. But it's a slight slowdown from last week's tally and not as bad as economists were expecting.

"The fact that nearly 1.2 million jobless claims in a single week is considered good news shows you how far we've deteriorated in the labor market," said Nela Richardson, investment strategist at Edward Jones. — AP

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A tree fell on a Huntington Station home during Tuesday's storm. Call your insurance company, take photos and keep receipts, experts say.

Sorting out storm damage

Navigating the insurance labyrinth can be tricky; here are a few guideposts to help

BY MAURA MCDERMOTT

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If a neighbor's tree falls on your house, what do you do?

That's the question many Long Island homeowners are facing in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Isaias, which brought trees and branches crashing down onto homes and power lines when it swept across the region Tuesday.

Local insurance experts — including a broker, adjuster and attorney — said the first step is to make sure the property is safe. Then photograph the damage, keep records of expenses and report the damage to your insurance company as soon as you can — since your insurer, not your neighbor's, will handle the claim, the experts said.

1. What insurance will cover

Insurance will typically cover tree removal if it causes structural damage or a safety problem such as a blocked driveway. But if the tree fell without causing damage, insurance typically will pay \$500 to \$1,000 for debris removal depending on the policy, and if there are additional costs it's up to the neighbors to work out a deal to pay for them, said Loretta Worters, a

spokeswoman for the Insurance Information Institute, a trade group. She said a homeowner's insurance rates typically would not rise as a result of one claim, but multiple claims could affect rates.

Much of the damage on Long Island seems to have been caused by wind bringing down trees and branches, which broke through roofs and downed power lines, in some cases exposing live wires and causing fires, said James Guericio, owner of Rubin & Rosen Adjusters in Melville and Brooklyn.

2. Get an estimate

It can help to get an estimate from a licensed contractor, "so when you speak with your insurance broker you have an idea what you're looking at and whether or not it exceeds your policy deductible," said Garrett Guttenberg, executive vice president of the Denis A. Miller Insurance Agency in Long Beach. Guttenberg said it's fine to do urgent repairs before handling the insurance claim, since insurers want to make sure the property is safe.

After superstorm Sandy struck in 2012, the average homeowners' claim was \$6,558, according to the Insurance Infor-

mation Institute. In a survey of its members, Consumer Reports found that the median amount paid by insurers for settled tree claims was \$4,110, the publication reported last year.

It's important to notify the insurance company "as soon as possible," preferably within a few days but certainly within weeks, said Shannon Boettjer, a partner with Jaspan Schlesinger LLP in Garden City. The insurer likely will cover any structural damage by a healthy tree that was felled by wind, up to the limits stated in the policy, she said. However, if the damage was caused by a tree that was visibly damaged or rotting before the storm, there could be problems with coverage, she said.

3. What if damage is caused by a neighbor's tree?

If the damage was caused by a neighbor's tree, the homeowners' insurer might go after the neighbor's insurer in a process called "subrogation," which could mean the homeowners would get reimbursed for their deductible, Boettjer said.

Insurance typically covers the home itself as well as structures such as detached garages, fences and the contents of the home, local ex-

perts said. Homeowners should not do anything unsafe such as climbing out onto a roof, Worters said. They should not overspend on temporary repairs, since those costs come out of the total settlement amount, she said. Homeowners should not discard anything without checking with a claims representative, and they should gather receipts and other information about damaged items, she said.

Insurance also can cover items such as a hotel stay if the home is not habitable, as well as decks, pools, appliances and devices damaged by electrical surges and food that spoiled during a power outage, said Guericio, a licensed public adjuster who is hired by homeowners to handle claims.

Among his clients is Ray Fontana, 55, a retail manager who lives with his wife, 15-year-old daughter and two dogs in Levittown, where a massive tree toppled by Isaias crushed their family room while Fontana rested a few feet away. Fontana said the tree, which was healthy and located on his own property, also damaged his neighbor's house. No one was injured in either home, and that's what matters, he said.

The damage, he said "is only material."