

"For I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" — Genesis 37:17



High 90°  
Low 68°

# SUNDAY

AUGUST 26,  
2012

Mostly sunny. East  
northeast wind 5 to 10  
mph., Weather 2A

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## Auburn player arrested

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NEIL ARMSTRONG: 1930 - 2012

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# Dealing with demolition



This abandoned house on East Spring Street was deemed unsafe and a public nuisance by the City of Dothan and has been scheduled for demolition.

## Long, costly process for city to demolish unsafe structures

BY LANCE GRIFFIN  
lgriffin@dothaneagle.com

The doors on some of the old, rickety houses on Dothan's most recent demolition list are missing. Windows are knocked out in others. Vandals and thieves have had their way in some.

Most of the homeowners walked away from the dilapidated structures a long time ago, one of the reasons the homes have wound up on the list. The homes are unable to be sold, and investing money just to repair them in order for them to be deemed safe by the city is a losing proposition.

Many of the homes are worthless, but the cost of knocking them down

*"It's a property value thing. If you have a house next to you that is falling apart, it's going to drop property values."*

Todd McDonald,  
Dothan planning director

can be expensive for the city. And, the chances of recovering the costs from the property owners are slim.

City demolition of homes is far from an epidemic, compared to bigger cities and areas where property values have plummeted. Still, Dothan has already identified 57 structures as unsafe this year. The city must, however, go through an exhaustive and expensive process to

give the property owner an opportunity to take care of his or her home before the city has to do it for them.

"We beg them. Please come fix them," said City Clerk Pam McCoy, whose office files contain reams of paperwork that track the process from beginning to end.

City of Dothan Municipal Code grants the local government authority to judge a house unsafe to the extent that it creates a public nuisance. This typically happens when buildings have been abandoned for long periods of time and begin to deteriorate. The house could then become unstable and unsafe to live in, but could also be deemed a

See **DEMOLITION**, Page 3A



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A steady stream of cars move north in the middle Keys as the Florida Keys prepare for Tropical Storm Isaac on Saturday.

## Isaac bringing lots of wind, rain to region

BY JIMMY SAILORS  
jsailors@dothaneagle.com

### ONLINE

» For updates on the storm, visit [www.dothanhoustancountyema.org](http://www.dothanhoustancountyema.org).

### INSIDE

» Florida prepares for Isaac on eve of GOP convention. **6A**  
» Alabama officials watching tropical storm. **6A**  
» GOP delays convention business due to Isaac. **6A**

Expect tropical storm force winds and a lot of rain when Isaac comes calling.

Kelly Godsey, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Tallahassee, said current computer models show the storm is likely to hit the Gulf Coast between Mobile and Lake City, Fla., late Monday.

The wind and rain forecast for the Wiregrass depends in great part on the strength of the storm and where it comes ashore. Generally, the farther west it strikes the coast, the better it is for the Wiregrass.

Godsey said the best-guess forecast along the coast in Walton, Bay, Washington, Gulf and parts of Franklin counties

is 65 to 80 mph winds with gusts to 95 mph possible.

Godsey said the worst-case scenario for the region shows the possibility Isaac will develop into a category 2 hurricane with winds of 10 to 14 feet of storm surge at the head of Apalachee Bay.

When asked specifically about Fort

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