



This image from the Twitter page of Elon Musk shows Musk entering Twitter headquarters carrying a sink through the lobby area on Wednesday in San Francisco.

Elon Musk takes over Twitter but where will he go from here?

BY BARBARA ORTUTAY, TOM KRISHER AND MATT O'BRIEN
Associated Press

Elon Musk has taken control of Twitter after a protracted legal battle and months of uncertainty. The question now is what the billionaire Tesla CEO will actually do with the social media platform.

Musk gave one indication of where he's headed in a tweet Friday, saying no decisions on content or reinstating of accounts will be made until a "content moderation council" is put in place. The council, he wrote, would have diverse viewpoints.

Major personnel shakeups are widely expected, with Musk ousting several top Twitter executives on Thursday. A fourth confirmed his departure, in a tweet.

But Musk, the tech guru and self-proclaimed "Chief Twit," has otherwise made contradictory statements about his vision for the company — and shared few concrete plans for how he will run it after buying it for \$44 billion.

That has left Twitter's users, advertisers and employees to parse his every move in an effort to guess where he might take the company. Many are looking to see if he will come back a number of influential conservative figures banned for violating Twitter's rules — speculation that is only heightened by upcoming elections in Brazil, the U.S. and elsewhere.

"I will be digging in more today," he tweeted early Friday, in response to a conservative political podcaster who has complained that the platform favors liberals and secretly downgrades conservative voices.

Former President Donald Trump, an avid tweeter before he was banned, said Friday he was "very happy that Twitter is now in sane hands" but promoted his own social media site, Truth Social, that he launched after being blocked from the more widely used platform.

Trump was banned two days after the Jan. 6 attacks for a pair of tweets that the company said continued to cast doubts on the legitimacy of the presidential election and raised risks for the presidential inauguration that Trump said he would not be attending.

Trump has repeatedly said that he will not return to Twitter

even if his account is reinstated, though some allies wonder if he'll be able to resist as he moves closer to announcing another expected presidential campaign. His Twitter account remained suspended Friday.

Meanwhile, conservative personalities on the site began recirculating long-debunked conspiracy theories, including about COVID-19 and the 2020 election, in a tongue-in-cheek attempt to "test" whether Twitter's policies on misinformation were still being enforced.

The mercurial Musk has not made it easy to anticipate what he'll do.

He has criticized Twitter's dependence on advertisers, but made a statement Thursday that seemed aimed at soothing their fears. He has complained about restrictions on speech on the platform — but then vowed he wouldn't let it become a "hellscape." And for months it wasn't even clear if he wanted to control the company at all.

After Musk signed a deal to acquire Twitter in April, he tried to back out of it, leading the company to sue him to force him to go through with the acquisition. A Delaware judge had ordered that the deal be finalized by Friday.

Wedbush analyst Dan Ives estimated that Musk and his investors overpaid. Even Musk has his \$44 billion price tag for Twitter was too high but that the company had great potential.

The payment "will go down as one of the most overpaid tech acquisitions in the history of M&A deals on the Street, in our opinion," Ives wrote in a note to investors. "With fair value that we would peg at roughly \$25 billion, Musk overpaid. Twitter remains a major head scratcher that ultimately he could not get out of once the Delaware Courts got involved."

After months of uncertainty, a series of moves by Musk this week signaled that the deal would in fact go through.

On Wednesday, he strolled into the company's San Francisco headquarters carrying a porcelain sink and tweeted "entering Twitter HQ — let that sink in!" Then on Thursday, he tweeted, "the bird is freed," a reference to Twitter's logo.

The same day, Musk fired CEO Parag Agrawal, CFO Ned Segal and Chief Legal Counsel Vijaya Gadde. Sean Edgett, who had been Twitter's general counsel, confirmed on Twitter Friday that he's also out of job,

posting that the company is full of the most amazing people. "Keep taking good care of this place, Tweagie," he added, referring to the company name for Twitter's legal department. Gadde, meanwhile, removed all references to her former employer from her Twitter bio, while trolls continued to post thousands abusive messages in replies to her most recent tweet.

As concerns rise about the direction of Twitter's content moderation, European Union Commissioner Thierry Breton tweeted to Musk on Friday that "in Europe, the bird will fly by our rules."

Breton and Musk met in May and appeared in a video together in which Musk said he agreed with the 27-nation bloc's strict new online regulations. Its Digital Services Act threatens big tech companies with billions in fines if they don't police platforms more strictly for illegal or harmful content such as hate speech and disinformation.

Musk has also spent months deriding Twitter's "spam bots" and making sometimes conflicting pronouncements about Twitter's problems and how to fix them.

He posted a note Thursday aimed at addressing concerns that his plans to promote free speech by cutting back on moderating content will open the floodgates to more online toxicity and driveaway users. It showed a newfound emphasis on ad revenue, especially a need for Twitter to provide more "relevant ads" — which typically means targeted ads that rely on collecting and analyzing users' personal information.

About 90% of Twitter's revenue comes from advertising, but it's far from being the biggest digital marketing platform. Google, Amazon and Meta account for about 75% of digital ads. Twitter was just 1% of global digital ad spending in 2022, according to an Insider Intelligence projection.

Lou Paskalis, former head of media for Bank of America, said Twitter's most loyal advertisers, many Fortune 100 companies, believe in the platform and probably won't leave unless "some really untoward things" happen.

The takeover means Twitter is becoming a private company. Trading of its shares was suspended Friday, and they will be pulled from the New York Stock Exchange next month.

As fentanyl drives overdose deaths, mistaken beliefs persist

BY GEOFF MULVIHILL
Associated Press



A photojournalist takes pictures of the exhibits on "The Faces of Fentanyl" at DEA headquarters before a press event at DEA headquarters, Arlington, Va., on Sept. 27.

Lillianna Alfaro was a recent high school graduate raising a toddler and considering joining the Army when she and a friend bought what they thought was the anti-anxiety drug Xanax in December 2020.

"The pills were fake and contained fentanyl, an opioid that can be 50 times as powerful as the same amount of heroin. It killed them both."

"Two years ago, I knew nothing about this," said Holly Groelle, the mother of 19-year-old Alfaro, who lived in Appleton, Wisconsin. "I felt bad because it was something I could not have warned her about, because I didn't know."

The drug that killed her daughter was rare a decade ago, but fentanyl and other lab-produced synthetic opioids now are driving an overdose crisis deadlier than any the U.S. has ever seen. Last year, overdoses from the drugs claimed more than 100,000 lives for the first time, and the deaths this year have remained at nearly the same level — more than gun and auto deaths combined.

The federal government counted more accidental overdose deaths in 2021 alone than it did in the 20-year period from 1979 through 1998. Overdoses in recent years have been many times more frequent than they were during the black tar heroin epidemic that led President Richard Nixon to launch his War on Drugs, or during the cocaine crisis in the 1980s.

As fentanyl gains attention, mistaken beliefs persist about

the drug, how it is trafficked and why so many people are dying.

Experts believe deaths surged not only because the drugs are so powerful, but also because fentanyl is laced into so many other illicit drugs, and not because of changes in how many people are using. In the late 2010s — the most recent period for which federal data is available — even as skyrocketing deaths as the number of people using opioids was dropping.

Advocates warn that some of the alarms being sounded by politicians and officials are wrong and potentially dangerous. Among those ideas: that tightening control of the U.S.-Mexico border would stop the flow of the drugs, though experts say the key to reining in the crisis is reducing drug demand; that fentanyl might turn up in kids' trick-or-treat baskets this Halloween; and that merely touching the drug briefly can be fatal — something that researchers found untrue and that advocates worry can make first responders hesi-

tate about giving lifesaving treatment.

All three ideas were brought up this month in an online video billed as a pre-Halloween public service announcement from a dozen Republican U.S. senators.

A report this year from a bipartisan federal commission found that fentanyl and similar drugs are being made mostly in labs in Mexico from chemicals shipped primarily from China.

In New England, fentanyl has largely replaced the supply of heroin. Across the country, it's being laced into drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine, sometimes with deadly results. And in cases like Alfaro's, it's being mixed in Mexico or the U.S. with other substances and pressed into pills meant to look like other drugs.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency has warned that fentanyl is being sold in multicolored pills and powders — sometimes referred to as "rainbow fentanyl" — marketed on social media to teens and young adults.

North Augusta South Carolina's Riverfront

DELINQUENT TAX SALE CITY OF NORTH AUGUSTA COUNTY OF AIKEN STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA TAX SALE 2022

By authority of certain resolutions directed to me by the Finance Director of the City of North Augusta, South Carolina, I, Christine B. James, Tax Collector for the City of North Augusta, South Carolina, have seized, levied upon and taken into my exclusive possession the following. I will sell the same at the University of South Carolina Aiken Convocation Center located at 2049 Champion Way Grantville, SC on Monday, November 7, 2022 at 10:00 AM the same being the legal sales date, at public auction, to the highest bidder for cash, for taxes due of the City of North Augusta, South Carolina. 2021 TAXES WILL BE COLLECTED AT TIME OF SALE.

Payments received after 5:00 PM on October 24, 2022 may not have been credited to the listing below. For assistance, please contact the City of North Augusta Tax Department at 803-441-4214. Our office is located in the Municipal Building, 100 Georgia Avenue, North Augusta, SC 29841.

OWNER & DELINQUENT TAXPAYER	MAP NUMBER	TOTAL DUE
ABRAHAM MARGARET EST	007-09-05-005	9,733.67
ANDERSON ALBERT H	007-12-08-012	105.11
BAKER KULEIGH S JAMES	007-11-05-128	532.81
BAKER STUART L	007-13-38-009	37.49
BENNETT STEVEN M & MEGAN V	022-19-01-088	36.84
CANNON TIFANY W	007-09-11-028	225.14
CARPENTER COLEMAN SR	007-16-09-010	55.24
CORN ROBERT L JR	007-09-05-009	304.59
CROSS TRAINING COMMUNITIES INC	007-08-02-017	90.74
DERRECK MARINE	013-05-12-014	386.57
DONCHEZ DERRICK	006-15-11-019	390.81
EMERY KAYMOND L & TRICIA M	006-14-10-002	382.35
FERGUSON KATHERINE L	006-20-07-022	156.67
GAINES KAREN COLEMAN	007-17-03-003	80.59
GENTRY SANDY L	006-09-01-083	532.81
GREER CLINTON EDWARD & CRYSTAL	007-12-04-002	427.15
GRONSKI BONNY	010-13-09-008	405.17
GVS HOLDING IV LLC	006-16-10-010	236.97
GVS HOLDING V LLC	007-09-12-007	122.86
GVS HOLDING VI LLC	007-16-02-023	245.57
HAMBRICK ASSOCIATES LLC	005-14-04-010	42.56
HAMBRICK ASSOCIATES LLC	005-17-01-012	77.21
HOWIE JIMMIE H	007-14-17-004	9,071.05
JACKSON PORTIA GORDO	006-19-02-002	67.07
JACKSON PORTIA GORDO	007-16-06-012	329.95
JENNINGS WALTER NEAL	007-12-10-019	350.83
JOHNSON CHARLES DON	007-14-04-010	573.38
JOHNSON MAMIE L EST	006-20-13-002	624.10
JSMG DEVELOPMENT LLC	012-13-04-013	274.16
LEGGINS JEANNETTE K EST	006-18-05-069	539.57
LINDA PRICE BANNISTER REVOCABL	006-16-01-009	464.34
LINDALE AMY REBECCA	006-09-10-016	415.31
LISCIONE RYAN	013-05-11-038	568.31
LONGTIN ED F	007-09-07-008	124.55
MEREDETH C DUBOSE AS PR FOROR	007-09-05-011	712.84
NORTH AUGUSTA SELF STORAGE INC	006-16-08-001	6,452.94
DAK LEAF PLACE HOMEOWNERS ASSO	007-09-12-011	37.49
REALTY ZONE LLC	013-05-08-005	406.02
REDRISK REALTY LLC	006-16-10-011	56.99
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE G OWNER LLC	007-14-19-005	153,236.64
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE D OWNER LLC	007-14-19-007	76,565.58
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE G OWNER LLC	007-17-02-008	55,299.72
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE H OWNER LLC	007-17-02-006	5,412.90
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE H OWNER LLC	007-17-02-009	1,491.36
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE H OWNER LLC	007-17-02-010	1,354.12
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE H OWNER LLC	007-17-02-011	1,354.12
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE H OWNER LLC	007-17-02-012	1,354.12
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE H OWNER LLC	007-17-02-013	1,354.12
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE I OWNER LLC	007-17-02-004	21,853.51
RIVERSIDE VILLAGE K OWNER LLC	007-13-42-003	468,311.25
ROBINSON SARAH A	006-16-11-023	211.61
ROBER PAUL ETAL	007-07-14-017	37.49
SAVITZ PARTNERSHIP	007-12-06-005	2,261.19
SFR3 LLC-00B	013-10-02-013	44.25
SFR3-00S LLC	006-16-10-001	473.33
SMITH DENISE DLTS	007-13-02-004	132.16
SOTO YAMIL & ANDREA	007-12-10-009	232.74
STADTMILLER NANCY K	006-17-06-095	460.12
SUMNER LARKS DEVE L L C	012-13-04-018	339.24
TENNISON CHARLES J JR	006-20-04-013	151.59
THE RETREAT AT WALNUT VILLAGE	010-14-14-010	1,066.16
THE RETREAT AT WALNUT VILLAGE	010-14-15-013	212.45
WALKER DAVID	012-15-04-025	44.25
WALTON HAROLD	007-16-09-012	109.33
WEATHERBEE THEODORE	006-20-11-002	145.68
WILLIAMS EARL	007-16-10-006	111.02
WILLIAMS ROBIN D	007-11-05-132	504.07
WILLS ESTATE MATTIE B	006-15-03-005	457.58
W J W WRNIA LLC	006-16-12-006	525.20
		830,816.30

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