

County prohibits short-term rental stays

To reduce exposure to and spread of COVID-19, the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners has prohibited short-term rental stays in the rural, unincorporated areas of the county. The order does not apply to short-term rentals in the City of Sisters.

The order, which goes into effect immediately, will prohibit stays of less than 30 days in vacation rentals, short-term rentals, timeshares, inns and bed and breakfasts. It will remain in effect until May 15. The order does not prevent an owner of a timeshare from using their own timeshare, but it does restrict them from renting their timeshare to another party.

“We’re doing everything we can to protect the health and safety of Deschutes County residents,” said Deschutes County Commissioner Patti Adair. “It is our hope that taking this step now will limit non-essential travel to our region and help to reduce the spread of COVID-19.”

During their meeting last week, commissioners said they’ve received multiple requests from local residents to issue the order based on behavior they’ve seen the past two weeks. Many of the requests came from permanent residents who live in resort communities.

“By taking this step, we hope our region will be better positioned to recover quickly after the pandemic ends,” said Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Henderson. “Central Oregon is a fantastic place to visit, but for now, some trips must wait. We need to take steps now to ensure that we’re doing everything we can to control and contain the spread of this virus.”

The order does not prohibit reservations needed for permitted essential travel, including reservations needed for health, safety or employment.

For more information, visit www.deschutes.org. A copy of the full order is available in the County’s news section.

Local fire chiefs institute burn ban

Deschutes County Fire Chiefs are temporarily closing outdoor burning as a result of the COVID-19 virus. Outdoor burning will close at sunset on Friday, April 10.

Ban also includes Camp Sherman in Jefferson County.

Outdoor burning restrictions may be lifted if impacts of the COVID-19 virus subside before fire season begins.

Local fire officials say the decision to temporarily close outdoor burning was not easy. The health benefits for vulnerable populations were

considered along with the need to encourage people to reduce combustible vegetation around their homes.

Fire Chiefs consulted with officials at the Deschutes County Emergency Operations Center as well as regional wildfire protection agencies, including the Oregon Department of Forestry, before making the final decision.

Deschutes County Fire Defense Board Chief Mike Supkis said, “We are preparing for a potential increase in emergency response activity

in the coming weeks. We want to ensure we have enough firefighter paramedics available to care for residents who become sick.”

Most Deschutes County fire departments also provide ambulance transport services. If firefighter paramedics are responding to burning complaints or escaped controlled burns, responses to medical emergencies could be slowed.

Chief Supkis encourages residents to contact their local fire department if they have any questions.

Small businesses can apply for loans

Small businesses impacted by coronavirus can start applying for emergency loans to cover payroll and other costs, according to Treasury Department guidance.

The Treasury published fact sheets for lenders and borrowers for the \$349 billion Paycheck Protection Program that was part of the \$2.3 trillion economic lifeline package enacted March 27.

The program is relying on the Small Business Administration’s existing network of around 1,800 banks and credit unions in its Section 7(a) loan guaranty program to provide small businesses forgivable loans to cover payroll and other fixed costs. Small businesses and sole proprietorships could start applying Friday, April 3, for loans from existing SBA-approved lenders. Independent contractors and self-employed individuals can do the same starting April 10.

Nonprofit organizations can also apply.

Call list below for banks who can administer forgivable loans:

You do not need to put up collateral.

One will pay for two months of payroll, two months of rent and utilities. Or, you can apply for a \$10,000 forgivable loan (can’t

use both programs):

First Interstate Bank, Amy Berger, 541-617-3612, amy.berger@fib.com firstinterstatebank.com.

MidOregon Credit Union, Mike Testerman, 541-585-1879, mtesterman@midoregon.com.

Wells Fargo Bank, Jessica Beck, 503-318-3988, jessica.beck2@wellsfargo.com.

Airport travelers asked to self-quarantine

With a surge in COVID-19 cases expected to intensify later this month, officials across the region are urging people to take steps to reduce the spread of contamination to alleviate pressures on hospitals.

The City of Redmond-owned Redmond Municipal Airport (RDM) is now encouraging all airport passengers to do a 14-day in-home self-quarantine upon arrival in Central Oregon.

“These actions are difficult, but they will help flatten the curve and lay the groundwork for a quicker recovery,” said Redmond Mayor George Endicott.

With the virus spreading

more each day, this recommendation is being made regardless of the originating airport. RDM is currently experiencing a 90 percent reduction in travelers passing through the terminal, down from a daily average of 1,500.

Individuals who develop symptoms during their voluntarily self-quarantine should contact their medical provider immediately. For general questions about the virus and/or symptoms call the free COVID-19 non-emergency hotline at 541-699-5109, open from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. The hotline connects callers with caregivers and county health professionals.



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