

# Gov. extends state of emergency

By Sara Cline  
Associated Press/Report for America

PORTLAND (AP) — Governor Kate Brown on Thursday, February 25 extended Oregon's declaration of a state of emergency until May 2 as confirmed COVID-19 cases drop but hundreds of new cases continue to be reported daily.

"Throughout the pandemic, Oregonians have made smart choices that have protected our families and loved ones," Brown said. "Our infection and mortality rates have consistently remained some of the lowest in the country. And, for the first time, COVID-19 critical-care units are seeing fewer and fewer patients."

The Oregon Health Authority on Thursday reported 553 new confirmed COVID-19 cases, bringing the state total to 154,554. The state's death toll is 2,204.

The agency's weekly COVID-19 report, which was released Wednesday, shows a sharp decrease in daily cases, hospitalizations, and deaths from the previous week.

The health authority reported a 35 percent decrease in cases and a 42 percent decrease in hospitalization.

The emergency declaration is the legal underpinning for the executive orders the governor has issued, including her orders surrounding reopening Oregon, childcare, schools, and higher education operations. Extending the state of emergency declaration allows those orders to stay in effect. The governor

reviews and reevaluates each of her emergency orders every 60 days

Brown first declared an emergency declaration in March 2020, when there were only 14 known COVID-19 cases in the state.

"As we vaccinate thousands of Oregonians each day and reopen more school buildings and businesses as safely as possible, now is not the time to let up our guard. New, more infectious COVID-19 variants are circulating in the United States, including several confirmed cases in Oregon.

Oregon Republican senators refused to show up to Thursday's floor session, objecting to the governor's COVID-19 restrictions and handling of reopening schools, vaccine rollout, and economic recovery.

In a statement from Senate Republicans, the lawmakers said, "Despite declining case counts, today you extended your emergency declaration, squeezing Oregonians even more. The Legislature cannot do its work to help Oregonians

**“ The Legislature cannot do its work to help Oregonians recover when people cannot go back to work because of orders requiring small businesses to stay closed. — Senate Republicans**

**“ ...Oregonians have made smart choices that have protected our families and loved ones. — Gov. Kate Brown**

recover when people cannot go back to work because of orders requiring small businesses to stay closed."

As case counts have improved, the governor announced that 16 counties, including Marion County where the Capitol is, will be moving to lower risk levels — allowing increased capacity for indoor dining and gyms. The new risk levels go into effect Friday.

Five counties — Benton, Coos, Douglas, Jefferson and Josephine — remain in the 'extreme risk' level, which bans indoor dining.

"For the second time in a row, we are seeing great progress in stopping the spread of COVID-19 across Oregon and saving lives," Brown said.

The Oregon Health Authority also reported that 22,841 new doses of the COVID-19 vaccinations were added to the state immunization registry.

A cumulative total of 881,206 first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered to Oregonians.

Last week, vaccine eligibility opened up to people 70 and older. As of Monday, people who are 65 or older are eligible for vaccine.

# Grazing rights rescinded for controversial ranchers

PORTLAND (AP) — A senior adviser in the U.S. Department of Interior on Friday rescinded a January Trump administration decision to grant grazing allotments to an Oregon ranching family whose members were convicted of arson in a court battle that triggered the takeover of a federal wildlife refuge by right-wing extremists.

The new memo from the Interior secretary's office found that the Trump administration hadn't allowed for sufficient time to receive and consider public challenges to the permit for Hammond Ranches Inc.

*The Oregonian/OregonLive* reports the latest action came just days before

the cattle were expected to be turned out on public lands neighboring the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon.

Steven Hammond, co-owner of the ranch, and his father, Dwight, were both convicted of arson for setting fire to range land and sent to prison for mandatory five-year sentences.

That led to the armed occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge for 41 days in 2016

President Donald Trump pardoned the Hammonds in 2018, allowing them to be freed from prison. In 2014, when Barack Obama was president, the BLM denied Hammond Ranches a grazing permit renewal.

**Sisters Dental**

**WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!**

Trevor Frideres, D.M.D.  
Greg Everson, D.M.D.

**SISTERS DENTAL**  
www.sistersdental.com

541-549-2011  
491 E. Main Ave. • Sisters

Hours: Mon., 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Tues.-Thurs., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri., 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Let Us Help You Get Through WINTER...**

Snow Shovels  
Roof Snow Rakes  
Wood Fuel Pellets & Delivery  
Pipe Insulation  
Ice-melt & More!

**HOYT'S HARDWARE & BUILDING SUPPLY, Inc.**

Hours: M-F 8 to 5, Sat. 8 to 4, Closed Sundays  
440 N. Pine St. • 541-549-8141 • www.hoyts.net

**CORK CELLARS WINE & BISTRO**

Now Open for **INDOOR dining!**  
Tuesday-Saturday, 3 to 8 p.m.  
Previous strict COVID guidelines will be enforced.

391 W. Cascade Ave. | 541-549-2675  
corkcellarswinebistro.com

**LOCALLY OWNED**

Local is what we are. Local is who we love.

**FOOD4LESS**

Located in the Cascade Village Shopping Center, Bend  
Open every day, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
**Isolated shopping hour: 6 to 7 a.m.**

- Large organic produce selection
- Huge organic & natural selection storewide
- Meat cut & ground fresh daily
- Huge bulk-foods department
- All your favorite local brands & items
- Only 20 minutes from Sisters
- Proud to be 100% locally owned & operated

**LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

\$200-a-cord juniper firewood delivered

Winter brush removal, burning & hauling debris

Tree pruning

Pre-spring cleanup

*No Job Too Big Or Too Small!*

Specializing in Sisters Properties  
**541 977 6711**  
alpineland@aol.com | Vernon Stubbs

**SISTERS COFFEE CO**

NOW OPEN FOR INDOOR SEATING  
WELCOME BACK SISTERS!

273 W Hood Ave. Sisters, OR Coffee Roasted Daily Open 6am-6pm 541.549.0527