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ODOT expanding salt treatments



The Oregon Department of Transportation primarily uses sand, deicing treatment and plows to clear roads and improve travel conditions throughout the state. PHOTOS BY MOLLY J. SMITH/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Oregon prepares interstates for icy winter weather

LAUREN HERNANDEZ
SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL
USA TODAY NETWORK

After last year's historically wet, snowy winter in the Mid-Willamette Valley, Oregon agencies are preparing to expand salt treatments on state roads.

Freezing rain, sleet and thick snowpacks created hazardous traveling conditions throughout the state, causing multiple car crashes and vehicles spinning out of control on Interstate 5.

"We actually spread salt on a nine-mile stretch of I-5 just south of Salem near Albany for the first time," said Lou Torres, the Marion County spokesman for the Oregon Department of Transportation. "The heavy snow and ice made travel through that area of hills and curves almost impossible."

In Salem, drivers slowly navigated the icy roads while Cherriots — Salem-Keizer's public transit system — experienced delays and cut morning service, and entire roadways were closed until crews could clear accumulated snow and slush.

While Salem city officials do not plan on using salt this winter — part of a decision officials made back in 1989 in an effort to be environmentally friendly in road clearing tactics — ODOT is expanding its salt treatments on two major roadway arteries in the state.

More miles of road may be salted

ODOT currently spreads salt as needed 100 miles north of the California border on Interstate 5 and 100 miles west of the Idaho border on Interstate 84. Salt treatments are expected to expand as needed to 200 miles on each route, said statewide spokesman Dave



A loader with Marion County Public Works clears out a lot to be used for snow removal in January along Highway 22.

"Salt is just a tool in our toolbox. That doesn't mean we're going to use it every time. We're trying to minimize the salt."

DAVE THOMPSON, OREGON STATEWIDE SPOKESMAN

Thompson.

He said the department started testing salt treatments on highways in 2012 as a way to match surface conditions for travelers driving in and out of Oregon from California and Idaho.

"Let's say you were driving north on Interstate 5 from California, where they use salt right up to the

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Silver Falls schools' process criticized

Overhauled policy changes being scrutinized by parents

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL
USA TODAY NETWORK

The rules governing everything from animal dissection to sex education in Silver Falls schools are being overhauled this year, and some members of the public aren't happy with the process.

"We have not received anything about these policy changes," said Michele Finicle, a parent and former school board candidate who spoke at the Nov. 14 school board meeting. She said the board isn't "giving the public information in a timely fashion."



Andy Bellando

At the meeting, several audience members requested access to policy documents — present and proposed — as they undergo changes over the next six months.

Administrators responded by posting online 286 pages of revisions now under consideration by the seven-person school board.

At issue for some were proposed revisions to the 1989 rule on teaching religion in schools.

"It seems an attempt to expand or promote the teaching of religion in public schools," testified Jossi Davidson, whose kids graduated from Silverton High School. "(Teaching religion) is just one more reason students see differences with each other. It's just going to drive wedges in our community that don't need to be here."

Board member Jennifer Traeger said she also favors the old language over the proposed new policy "because it's much more specific."

If adopted, the new policy would essentially change a six-point list of prohibited actions into a short, general statement saying that teachers can't "promote or inhibit, openly or covertly or by subtlety, a particular religious belief."

Supt. Andy Bellando said the language originated with the Oregon School Board Association, an organization now guiding Silver Falls through an 18-month process to update its entire policy handbook. A year ago, the board signed an \$8,500 contract with OSBA to help modernize all district rules. Bellando and his School Policy Review Committee have been meeting with an OSBA representative since last December, bringing proposed language to the board section-by-section. Each section must then have a three-month public airing before going to vote.

The School Policy Review Committee comprises Bellando, board member Ron Valoff, former board chair Wally Lierman, and a rotating selection of principals, he said.

But continuing to include Lierman on the committee after he lost the election in May to Traeger is a bad move, said Sarah Weitzman, a parent and president of Silverton Friends of Music.

"As a constituent, I would prefer an actual, sitting board member be on this committee," Weitzman testified at the meeting.

Traeger briefly aired the idea of creating a standing policy review committee, responsible for major policy overhauls, as well regular updates throughout the year. Other Oregon boards have taken on the job of rewriting policy themselves in work sessions.

For now, those interested in reading Silver Falls' current and proposed policy on teaching religion — and all instruction, for that matter — can go online to <http://silverfallsschools.org/meetings/> and read "Proposed Revision to Policy Section I, parts 1 and 2." The entire policy handbook can be found at <http://policy.osba.org/sfalls/>.

CREEKSIDE CHAT

A holiday drive to aid foster kids

JUSTIN MUCH
SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL
USA TODAY NETWORK

Joshua Gorrell, a broker and design consultant with Cascadia Mt. Realty, stopped into Live Local Marketplace & Café on Wednesday, Nov. 15, to provide specifics for Cascadia's "Christmas Cases for Kids," which is designed to benefit foster kids in the region.

"It's always been a big part of our company to give back to the community," Gorrell said. "We want the community to know that we support them just as they support us."

Christmas Cases for Kids focuses on practical items, but toys or other presents that may bring joy to the beneficiaries are also accepted.

The drive's flyer, which will be going up around Silverton, provides an itemized list of donations sought: backpacks, gym bags, diapers, pajamas, underwear, socks, books, small toys, small fleece blankets, toothbrushes and toothpaste, soaps, shampoos and snacks.

Joshua said Cascadia was in large part inspired by Comfort Cases, <https://www.comfortcases.org>, which states its motto is to "Provide comfort and support to kids in foster care." While Cascadia's entry into this quest is focused around the holiday — the donation drive is scheduled through Dec. 15 — the company hopes to see it expand, possibly even into a year around



Cascadia Mt. Realty Broker Joshua Gorrell stops by the Creekside Chat on Nov. 15, to share information about Christmas Cases for Kids, benefiting foster kids.

JUSTIN MUCH/STAYTON MAIL

philanthropy.

Another inspiration for Joshua is Cascadia's Principal Broker **Christy Marsing-Barber**, who he said grew

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Silverton council take aim at nudity, feeding deer

JUSTIN MUCH
SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL
USA TODAY NETWORK

Public nudity and feeding deer, are among issues addressed by the Silverton City Council this month.

During its Monday, Nov. 6, meeting, the council passed several municipal code amendments to address issues that have emerged recently, including one that prohibits "certain acts in public," and another adding a chapter to the code dealing with animals, specifically prohibiting feeding deer.

The former emerged in work sessions held in August and October during which discussions about public nudity revolving around complaints of unlawful urination and defecation had surfaced. The general "nudity" element of the topic was modulated in favor of focusing on the specific acts that elicited complaints.

"There have been numbers of complaints, at least of the public urination, by one or more individuals in

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