

Deputy

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hended to the ground by four police officers is a clear example of excessive use of force. Period," he said, adding that the behavior "degrades community trust in law enforcement."

The Saturday before his arrest, witnesses reported seeing Straw yell at passersby about cougars and military special forces. A mental health Mobile Crisis Response Team responded, but Straw refused their help.

On Monday, Straw began to shout into the command center and radio operations center while deputies were conducting a search and rescue operation for two missing fishermen, who would be found safe several hours later.

After Straw became so disruptive that staff were unable to hear search personnel, deputies asked him to leave. Straw returned to the command post twice, and deputies attempted to take him into custody.

According to the sheriff's office, Straw "physically resisted and force was used to take him into custody."

Four deputies confronted Straw and pulled him to the ground. Thompson appears to strike Straw several times, and a fifth deputy rushes in to help restrain him.

Straw, whose last known address was in Scio, can be heard repeatedly pleading, "I am not resisting ... Please stop ... Help... I'm disabled. It hurts... I'm bleeding."

Deputies said they found a large fixed-blade knife in his possession.

In the video, a deputy can be seen carrying a knife away from the scene.

"I came to warn you about the cougar," he says while pinned to the ground. "There's a cougar. It's hurting people."

Marion County's use of force policy requires all sworn deputies to "hold the dignity and liberty" of people in the highest regard. Deputies should use "objective reasonableness" when using force and consider circumstances like the severity of the crime, when the suspect is resisting arrest and whether the person poses an immediate threat, according to the policy.

Department rules also require deputies to intervene when they see another deputy using force that is "clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable."

Sheriff's officials declined to comment on how the situation should have been handled.

Deputies are required to receive de-escalation and conflict simulation training.

According to state records, all five deputies received use-of-force training in the past four years. Thompson underwent training on handling mental health patients in April.

In 2017, he took three hours of training on use-of-force decision making scenarios, and two years ago, he passed a course on mental health de-escalation communication.

After Straw was restrained on Monday, he was evaluated by paramedics and met with the Mobile Crisis Response Team. Sheriff's officials said they plan to cite Straw for resisting arrest and interfering with police before transporting him to the Salem Psychiatric Crisis Center.

According to records, Straw was evicted from his apartment in May.

In his answer to the eviction, Straw cited his "extensive debilitating chronic total disability." He listed his alias as "Tessa Lovelace."

Documents involving a 2016 arrest for assault and harassment state that Straw had full-time employment as a software developer. His releasing documents stated he had depression, anxiety, ADHD and autism spectrum.

The alleged assault involved his neighbors, who Straw believed were setting off fireworks near his home. The charges were dismissed in 2017 due to lack of witness participation.

Sheriff's officials said the agency has been in consultation with the Marion County District Attorney's office.

Anyone who witnessed the confrontation or videoed the encounter is asked to call 503-588-5032 or email sheriff@co.marion.or.us.

For questions, comments and news tips, email reporter Whitney Woodworth at wwoodwort@statesman-journal.com, call 503-399-6884 or follow on Twitter @wwoodworth

Algae

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tency of toxic algae, said Rebecca Hillwig, natural resource specialist with the Oregon Health Authority.

Both Hillwig and McMahan said toxic algae blooms have been more common, perhaps suggesting a link to the string of abnormally hot and dry spring months Oregon has seen in the past four years.

"I think it's fair to say that factors associated with global warming ... could definitely increase conditions that cause algae blooms," Hillwig said.

"There's a lot of factors to consider, but it's fair to say that we have the potential for more of these type of issues in the future."

Anatomy of an algae bloom

The first evidence of an algae bloom at Detroit Lake occurred May 8, said Lacey Goeres-Priest, Salem's water quality supervisor.

The city regularly tests for toxins at Detroit and "we had good results for many days following" the first evidence of the bloom, Goeres-Priest said.

In other words, the bloom hadn't turned toxic yet.

As the weather warmed, the bloom grew and developed toxins — specifically, the cyanotoxins known as cylindrospermopsin and microcystin.

Water samples taken May 21 came back with results May 23 that revealed toxin levels high enough to trigger a health advisory for Detroit Lake.

There is, again, nothing particularly

unusual about that.

Locals often reference the wildflowers and algae blooming at the same time of year — it's become part of life in the small tourist town.

Salem officials were confident enough they issued a press release on May 23 titled "City of Salem drinking water remains safe to drink."

Even so, there were hints something was different about this bloom.

Instead of one bloom — as was the case in 2017 — testing revealed toxic algae in three different locations at the lake: Blowout Arm, Heater Creek Arm and near the dam.

More strikingly, the toxin levels were high in Blowout Arm — the liver toxin "microcystin" was tested at 48.21 parts per billion. A health advisory is triggered when levels are 4 parts per billion.

More testing, fewer answers

The toxins at Detroit Lake led to increased testing by city officials, including at Geren Island Treatment Facility on the North Santiam River.

Those tests showed concerning data. Tests from May 23 showed the toxin cylindrospermopsin at 6.9 parts per billion — above the safe threshold even for adults, according to OHA officials.

By the May 25 test, levels had dropped to 1.9 parts per billion — safe for adults but not for small children.

Since that time, city officials have regularly tested for toxins in the city's drinking water. After two negative tests, they lifted the health advisory June 2. But, additional tests showed high levels again, and the advisory was re-issued Wednesday.



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