

State releases guidelines for reopening schools in fall

■ Cohorts, social distancing among requirements; masks required for staff, only recommended for students

By Jackson Hogan
EO Media Group

SALEM — This fall, Oregon's K-12 students may finally get to return to their classrooms for the first time in half a year, based on new state safety guidelines. But school won't look the same as it did before COVID-19. New behaviors and rituals will need to be learned: Desks will be 6 feet apart.

Face coverings will be required for most school staff. Elementary students won't share glue sticks. "There is no doubt this spring was hard on students, families and educators," said a statement signed by state education and health directors Colt Gill and Pat Allen. "And yet, we believe returning to school, the planning it will

require, and the shifts in adult and student behavior it will require will be even more difficult." Much of the state's long list of reopening requirements and recommendations fall under a few ideals: Keep students and staff at a distance from each other, wipe down and sanitize objects frequently, and make sure everyone washes their hands often. Schools will be required to keep students in isolated groups, or cohorts, whenever possible. Cohorts must allow for at least 35

square feet per person, including staff, and they'll be assigned certain spaces only for their use. That includes bathrooms as well as classrooms, according to the state. The state guidelines admit keeping students in rigid cohorts is harder in middle and high schools — where students see multiple teachers in a day — but the state still recommends that all schools make plans to reduce mixing student cohorts. School schedules will also be modified to keep

as few students in hallways and shared spaces as possible. Furthermore, just about every object in schools that students touch, from desks to school bus seats to library books, should be sanitized frequently, according to the state. Face masks and coverings will be required for all staff who are regularly within 6 feet of other people in school, bus drivers, staff who prepare and/or serve meals, and school visitors. Front office staff will be required to wear larger,

plastic face shields, or be behind a plastic barrier. Students will not be required to wear face masks — although it is recommended, particularly for middle and high school students, who will have to mix with other students more often — and schools must continue to educate students who don't wear masks. Frequent hand washing will be required before eating meals. Elementary students will be required to wash their hands before and after using playground equipment.

N.C. speedway shut down by governor after holding races in protest

■ Thousands attended events before governor stepped in

By Gary Robertson
Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — The administration of North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper has ordered the closure of a small stock-car track that's allowed large crowds to gather repeatedly for weekend races, declaring it an "imminent hazard" for the spread of COVID-19.

The order says Ace Speedway in Alamance County, 65 miles northwest of Raleigh, is violating the governor's executive order limiting outside mass assemblies to 25 people. Media outlets have reported crowds at the speedway exceeding 2,000 people, including a gathering even after the Democratic governor's office wrote a letter stating the speedway's actions were in "open defiance" of the health restrictions. Media reports indicated many attendees at three weekend races since late May sat



Robert Willett/The News & Observer via AP

In this May 23 photo, race fans pray at a racetrack near Elon, N.C. North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper's administration has ordered closed the small stock-car track that's allowed large crowds to gather repeatedly for weekend races. Officials said Ace Speedway in Alamance County is an "imminent hazard" for the virus' spread and can't reopen unless it creates a safety plan to keep fans away.

and stood near each other, and few wore masks. The action came after Alamance County Sheriff Terry Johnson announced on Monday he wouldn't issue a misdemeanor citation to the speedway. He questioned the legality of Cooper's restrictions and said local tracks elsewhere weren't being punished for opening. Cooper had said he would act if Alamance County officials wouldn't. The speedway appeared

to attempt to bypass the governor's rules last Saturday by suggesting the gathering was protected by a First Amendment exemption. A placard at the speedway read: "This event is held in peaceful protest of injustice and inequality everywhere." Demonstrations had occurred in major cities over the past 10 days after the death of George Floyd while in Minnesota police custody.

Cases at seafood plant cause spike in Oregon's COVID-19 numbers

By Sara Cline
Associated Press

SALEM — Newport has been a blip on the radar when it comes to confirmed coronavirus cases in Oregon. Until Sunday. "Up until this point the pandemic has been distant. We have watched it unfold in other communities around the world, but not in our own," Kaety Jacobson, chair of the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, said during a news conference Monday. "In the last 48 hours that has changed. We now have a large outbreak in our community."

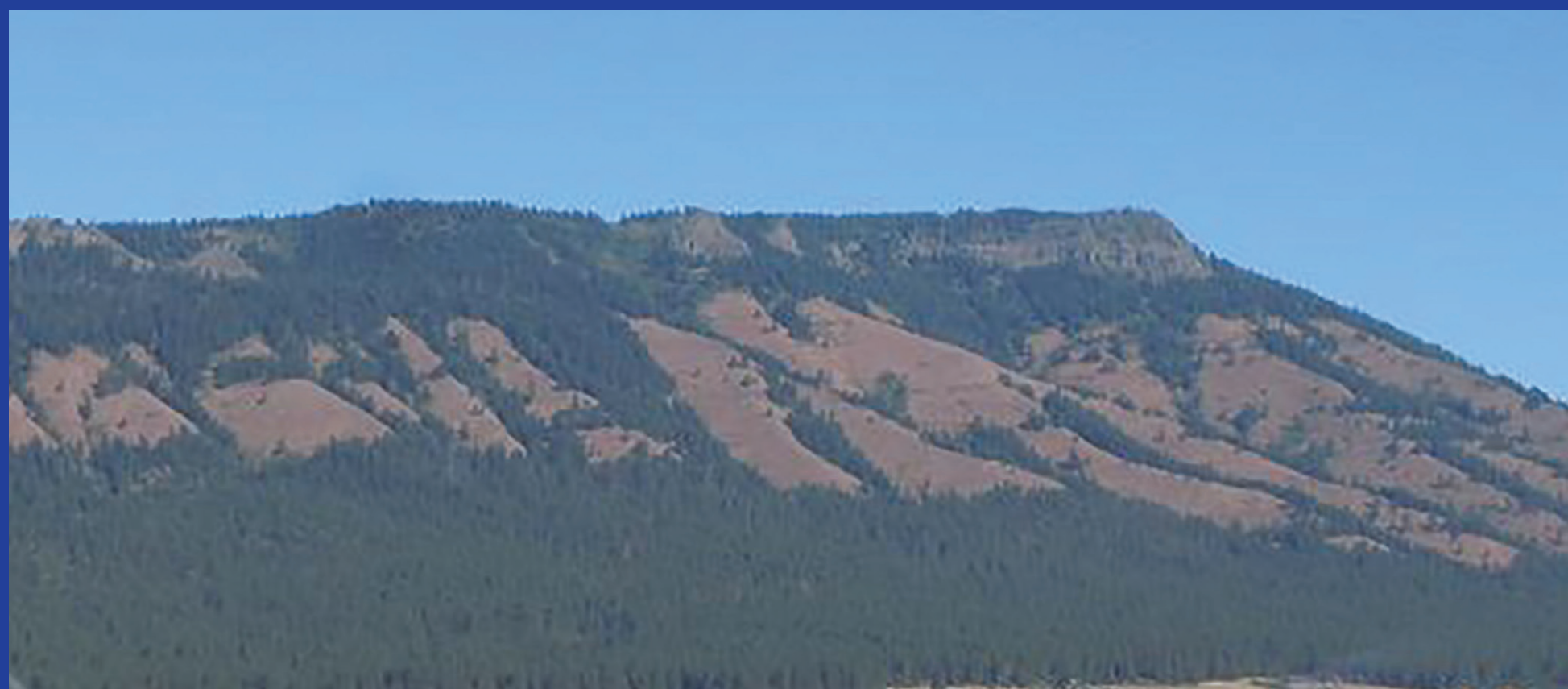
More than 120 workers at Pacific Seafood, a Newport seafood plant, have tested positive for the virus, the company said Sunday. "This county has done really well over the last three months," said David Long, the health officer for Lincoln County Public Health. "I think many of us felt that it was never really going to hit us here and so, waking up yesterday and hearing the news about 124 cases at Pacific Seafood was a

shock to many of us." The first signs of a possible outbreak came June 2, when Pacific Seafood had its first positive case. The next day, there were additional confirmed cases. By Sunday, 376 workers had been tested. Out of those tested, 53 employees and 71 locally-based contractors tested positive, according to Pacific Seafood. About 95% were asymptomatic, state officials said. The outbreak contributed to Oregon's highest case total in a single day as the state reported 146 cases Sunday.

Health officials through Tuesday reported about 5,000 positive cases, with 169 deaths. Pacific Seafood, which manages all parts of the supply chain from harvesting and fishing to processing, and distribution of seafood, beef, pork and poultry, has since suspended all operations. Lincoln County Public Health officials are working on contact tracing and urging people who know they have come

in contact with someone who has COVID-19, to self-isolate. The county isn't the only area that has seen an uptick in cases coming from the agriculture and food packing industry. In the state's most recent weekly report published June 3, there were 19 worksites with outbreaks. The majority were agriculture or food packing businesses. Among those worksites are two Townsend Farms locations in Multnomah County with 86 cases and National Frozen Foods in Linn County with 41 cases. Six coronavirus deaths have been associated with workplace outbreaks. Instead of implementing fines or penalties, Paul Cieslack, the medical director for communicable diseases and immunizations, said the health authority, Department of Agriculture and county officials are working with agriculture and food packing businesses to create guidelines to reduce the spread of the disease as well as provide more testing.

We at Loveland Funeral Chapel would like to say thank you to The Oregon State Police, Union County Sheriff's Office, La Grande Police Department, United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and everyone else who plays a role in protecting our way of life. Thank you for your service.



A VERY VERY SPECIAL THANKS GOES OUT TO ALL OF OUR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

