

# MASKS

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while trusting in attendees to make responsible decisions.

“If you still want to bring your mask because that’s comfortable, that’s fine,” Jennings said. “We’re at that point where people need to start taking care of each other and be conscientious, while still enjoying those things that keep us sane.”

HQ does not plan to require mask usage at concerts, but will update its policies if any changes occur in the future.

“I’m hoping that everyone has a vaccine or at least has taken the steps to protect themselves and others, not coming to the shows if they’re sick and those types of things,” Jennings said. “I’m relying on some sound-minded judgment calls by people that care about each other and want to get together.”

Bella Mercantile on Adams Avenue was stout in their enforcement of mask usage during the mandate, but will refrain from enforcing masks in its La Grande location moving forward. Manager Erin



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

**Zaquarie Mendenhall, an employee at La Grande Liquor and Smoke Shoppe, La Grande, stocks shelves on Tuesday, March 8, 2022. A common theme among local businesses is that many employees are tired of being tasked with policing mask mandates.**

Pierce said that business has stayed steady during the last two years, with the store experiencing one of its most successful years in 2021.

Pierce noted that a sizable portion of local customers were drawn to the

store because of its mask enforcement.

“I think that the bigger effect is going to be on the people who came to our store because we still required the masks, feeling safe coming here,” Pierce said. “We’re just going

to reassure them that we can still do curbside service and deliver and take precautions.”

Market Place Fresh Foods in La Grande is following a similar model, encouraging customers to be conscientious. Owner

Marco Rennie noted that employees and customers will not be required to wear masks, but that each person can choose to do what they feel is appropriate.

“If people still feel the need, then we encourage them to wear a mask when

they come in,” Rennie said. “Many people have gotten their vaccines and have the antibodies. People who are still concerned I think should continue to wear the masks.”

## Employee burden

One common theme among local businesses was fatigue among employees, who were tasked with policing the mandate.

“I think everybody is going to be really appreciative of not having to enforce it,” O’Dell said. “I feel like that burden was put on essential workers to enforce this mask mandate. It added to the essential workers’ burden of responsibility.”

Tasked with labor shortages and supply chain issues, employees policing the mandate added to the stress of working during a pandemic.

“I think it will help take some of the pressure off employees,” Rennie said. “For them to be in a place where they have to police it is difficult.”

Bella’s Pierce agreed: “I think there’s going to be a sense of relief in not having to deal with any confrontation.”

# EOU

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others less difficult.

“I’ll enjoy not having to wear a mask in class. It will make it much easier to communicate,” Millington said.

EOU women’s soccer coach Jake Plocher said EOU’s students have been good about following the mask mandate rule, but he senses they are ready to start going mask free.

“I can tell they are ready to get back to normal,” he said.

Brian Avila, EOU’s head athletic equipment manager, is eagerly anticipating the lifting of the mask mandate because it will make it easier to communicate. He explained that when he is in an environment where it is hard to hear people talking

he likes to read lips, something masks of course make impossible.

Avila noted that when he first started wearing masks the strings made the skin around his ears sore. Today, though, he feels no soreness because of calluses that have developed. While he has become accustomed to wearing masks indoors, he is happy the mandate is being lifted.

“It will be good to be back to normalcy,” he said.

Eastern will continue to monitor COVID-19 cases and will remain in contact with local and state health officials as it moves through changes in other safety and health protocols.

State and federal requirements for wearing masks in health care settings, within public transit and in other specialized set-

tings will remain in place after March 12, according to a press release from the school. Masks will still have to be worn at EOU’s student health center, said EOU Public Information Representative Vicky Hart.

Ron Wheeler, EOU’s food services general manager, is particularly looking forward to not wearing a mask. He noted that he came to Eastern two years ago, which means he has never been on campus when masks were not required. He feels good about Eastern’s COVID-19 status because he said a high percentage of its students are vaccinated for COVID-19.

Wheeler said that masks and sanitizing supplies will still be available to students.

“We have raised sanitizing to a new level,” he said. “Sanitizing stations are now everywhere you go.”



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File

**Dr. Lau Vargas studies in the campus library at Eastern Oregon University on Thursday, Oct. 28, 2021. Eastern Oregon University has announced that it will lift its mandate for wearing masks indoors beginning Saturday, March 12, in accordance with the state’s plan. The requirement has been in place for two years at EOU.**

## NAVIGATING A CHANGING TIME AND MEETING CUSTOMER NEEDS

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We recognize the impact that price increases have on our customers. As we make needed investments in our system and navigate economic trends, we will continue to take measures to keep our rates low and to capture savings for our customers.

On March 1, 2022, Pacific Power filed a general rate case requesting an overall rate change of \$82.2 million, or 6.6 percent, to become effective January 1, 2023. The company’s requested change will be reviewed by the Public Utility Commission of Oregon and if approved, the expected impact on the average monthly bill for an average residential customer using 900 kWh per month would be \$13.01 per month. The primary reason for this filing is to support our wildfire mitigation efforts, including vegetation management, as part of our larger commitment to providing resilient, safe, reliable electricity for our customers.

We understand the impact that price increases have on our customers and will work to mitigate that impact as much as possible. Customers can visit [pacificpower.net/wattsmart](http://pacificpower.net/wattsmart) for energy- and money-saving tips and information. Energy Trust of Oregon also offers energy efficiency programs and information to Oregon residents and businesses. Contact Energy Trust of Oregon at [energytrust.org](http://energytrust.org) or 1-866-368-7878 for more information.

Copies of Pacific Power’s rate request application are available at our main office, located at 825 NE Multnomah Street, Portland, Oregon 97232 and on our website at [pacificpower.net/rates](http://pacificpower.net/rates). Customers may contact Pacific Power for additional information about the filing by mail to Pacific Power’s main office at the address above, or by calling 1-888-221-7070. TDD/TTY users can call the National Relay Service or 1-888-221-7070. Para un representante que habla español, llame al 1-888-225-2611.

Requests to receive notice of the time and place of any hearing on this application may be directed to the Public Utility Commission of Oregon at 201 High Street SE, Suite 100, Salem, Oregon 97301-3398 or by calling 1-800-522-2404.

The purpose of this announcement is to provide our customers with general information regarding the company’s price increase application and the expected effect on customers. Calculations and statements contained in this notice are not binding on the Public Utility Commission of Oregon.



PUBLIC NOTICE DOCUMENT  
OREGON PRICE CHANGE APPLICATION

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