



# The Sandy Post

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## Snow east of Sandy causes biggest headaches

by DAN DILLON

A year-end storm blanketed the Sandy-Mt. Hood area with more than three feet of snow in some places, limiting mobility, closing schools and causing spotty power outages.

Locally, city and fire officials say their departments have coped well with the weather, but both are keeping their fingers crossed until the snow melts and the cold spell snaps.

Wednesday morning, the National Weather Service forecast dry weather until the weekend, with rain at times on Saturday and Sunday for northern Oregon. High temperatures are expected to climb into the mid-40s and lower-50s by the weekend also.

The heavy snowfall east of Sandy created the major points of concern.

Sandy Elementary District and Sandy Union High School District both closed their doors Monday through Wednesday, as driving problems east of the city hampered bus accessibility.

Elementary Superintendent Clark Lund said Wednesday morning that he expected to open school Thursday, but the possibility of some inconveniences for students living off the main county roads exists.

Lund said he drove more than 60 miles of county roads Tuesday and noted that the main problems are caused by bus turnarounds on dead-

end roads which have been plowed shut.

Roads, he noted, where students live who will have to make it to a main arterial for bus service are Kitzmiller Road, Brian Ranch Road, East Wildcat Mountain Road, Jadry Road, East and West Dowling Roads and Baty Road.

There will be service on Wildcat Mountain Road to 452nd Avenue. McCabe and Coalman Roads will also have bus service, he said.

For Portland General Electric officials, east of Sandy has been a "mess" since New Years Eve.

Bob Kallen, Sandy District manager, said Tuesday that while no major outages occurred, the spot outages are proving aggravating because of access problems in the

deep snow.

Trouble spots in the Sandy area have included Jadry Road, McCabe Road and Wildcat Mountain Road.

Kallen said that extra crews from Portland and contract crews are assisting local crews as they try to restore power to the customers.

City officials are optimistic that Sandy residents won't lose their water supply, despite heavy snows in the Alder Creek area east of Sandy, site of the treatment plant.

"We're not really worried about the water system, other than keeping power to our treatment plant and the phone lines," City Manager Roger Jordan said Wednesday. Electricity is needed to operate the pumps at the treatment plant, a pump station at Terra Firra and at the 500,000-gallon

reservoir.

Telephone lines signal from the reservoir to the treatment plant when water is needed.

"We feel our individual systems are very secure now," Jordan said. "All the city's water systems are working, but the exposure (at Alder Creek) is something we want to keep looking at."

Public works crews had been on 24-hour duty since New Years Eve as they worked to keep city streets open for motorists and maintain the water system.

Fire Chief Bob Rathke said that despite the snow, alarms have actually been down, with no major alarms.

Like other officials, though, he cast

a wary eye east of the city.

"East of the city, there's a hell of a lot of snow," he said. "Any alarms up there are going to be a problem."

"The county's got the roads plowed, but once we get off the main roads, it going to be a bear. So, hopefully that won't happen."

Rathke said most weather-related calls report arcing power lines. Because of the heavy concentration of snow, there is no real fire danger, he said, but PGE officials should be notified. In dry weather, however, it's a different story.

Rathke cautioned area residents to take extra care while the heavy concentration of snow is on the ground.

"Our response times are really increased," he said. "Heating appliances are running more than ever

this time of year and the heat gets a chance to build up. If things are going to break down, now is the time when they're going to do it."

A roof of a mobile home with built-on additions burned Monday at 35390 SE Bluff Road, as a couple were moving in. Rathke said the fire started when a metal chimney, in contact with a roof rafter for a long period of time finally burned.

The house was valued at \$30,000. Damaged was limited to \$1,250.

Rathke said snow presented no problem while fighting the fire, but getting there was different.

"It took a little longer to get there, but I don't think that contributed to the damage."

## Snow booms business, stops Hood traffic

by MICHAEL P. JONES  
Post Correspondent

Heavy snows over the weekend snarled traffic on Highway 26 in the Mt. Hood area and created a minor boom for some local businesses.

More than a foot of snow fell between Saturday and Sunday, drawing a large influx of skiers to the area's resorts and creating dangerous driving conditions by early afternoon Sunday.

At 5 p.m., winter recreationists were on the highway, traveling bumper-to-bumper at a snail's pace. By 5:15 p.m. traffic had stopped.

Sgt. Dan Wolf of the Oregon State Police said traffic backed up from east of Snow Bunny Lodge to as far west as the Salmon River Bridge near Brightwood. He blamed three incidents, all within moments of one another, for tying up the traffic.

A semi-truck and trailer jackknifed just above the escape ramp on Laurel Hill at 4:30 p.m., blocking traffic in both lanes of Highway 26.

Moments later a powerline fell across the highway near Zigzag.

Problems were compounded by a collision between two vehicles, without chains, near Snow Bunny Lodge.

It took up to two hours to traverse the steep seven-mile road from Timberline Lodge to Highway 26. Once at Government Camp, it took another three hours to travel the few miles to Rhododendron.

Jerry and Patty Reneau, Ripplebrook, said that once they entered the highway at Government Camp, it took them more than an hour and 20 minutes to go the first half mile.

### Highway 26 Closed

Wolf said that following the preceding weekend's traffic problems, the OSP was ready for heavy traffic, but "just couldn't physically keep up with the snow and icy conditions."

"There was just no possible way to forecast the snow conditions down the line," he said.

OSP troopers established roadblocks at the east end of Rhododendron at 1:30 p.m. Sunday and allowed only those vehicles equipped with chains or four-wheel drive to pass.

By 6:15 p.m. the highway was officially closed from Rhododendron to Madras. Traffic was prohibited until 7 a.m. Monday.

Travelers found the roads considerably narrowed by large snowbanks that lined the road. When state crews began plowing at 7 a.m. Sunday, OSP trooper Dave Whiteaker predicted they would be plowing all day. They did.

A dispatcher at Alpine Towing i Rhododendron said the snow kept that firm "wonderfully busy." She said the traffic problems around the area proved the "fun and games don't always mix with practicality."

"We permit too many people into one small area, who are ill-equipped to handle such conditions," she said. "When the traffic in the area reaches a saturation point, it should be cut off. But unfortunately, we have no way to regulate such a move."

### Boom on Tire Chains

Bill Stark, proprietor of the Mt. Hood Food and General Store at Rhododendron, said the weather was good for tire chain sales. He said he sold 100 pairs of chains within a five-day period. Last year he sold only two pairs.

"I've never seen so many people having so much fun, only to find themselves, later on, confused and frustrated with the heavy weather conditions," Stark said.

He estimated Monday that he still had 25 vehicles buried beneath the

snow in the store's parking lot. The spot is a popular spot for motorists to chain up, scrape the windshield and, now it appears, abandon their vehicle.

Darcy Gilbert, an employee at Ted's Brightwood Store, said milk, eggs, produce and fresh meat were fast-selling items as residents stocked up. Candles, flashlight batteries and kindling were also going fast as residents braced for possible outages.

Monday morning residents in scattered locations found themselves without power.

Bob Kallen, Sandy District manager for Portland General Electric, said scattered outages occurred near Government Camp, Rhododendron, Woodland-Faubian area, in the Lolo Pass Road area, along Welches Road and in portions of Brightwood.

Kallen said it isn't unusual for such outages in the Mt. Hood area, but there hasn't been one this large in some time.

He said the traffic jams didn't do much to alleviate the power outages as repair crews found it difficult to get to the stricken areas. "Crossing the highway was almost impossible," he said.

### Minor Telephone Problems

Carol Riffe, dispatcher for Continental Telephone in the Hoodland area, said the heavy snows caused only minor service interruptions.

Jerry Beech, repairman stationed at the utility's Welches office, said that only eight repairs were necessary as a result of the storm and the lines appear to be in condition.

## Two sledders die in crash with vehicle

Two Sandy residents were killed New Years day in a collision between an off-road vehicle and two sleds on a mountain road three miles east of Sandy, according to state police and Clackamas County sheriff's deputies.

Dead are Kevin Allen Fischer, 12, and Richard Glen Chaussee, 34.

The accident occurred about 6 p.m. near the 43700 block of SE Kiesecker Road, as the victims were sledding down the snow-covered road, according to sheriff's reports.

They collided with a four-wheel, motorcycle-type vehicle driven by Gordon Aaron Miller, 18, of Tillamook.

No citations have yet been issued, and the accident is still under investigation.



Photo by Michael P. Jones

With the heavy snowfall that opened the new year, heading for the hills seemed like the thing to do for an afternoon of skiing. However, so many skiers crowded the roads without traction devices that getting to the mountain was half the fun.

## Levy would give support to seniors

Spreading the cost around to those who use senior centers countywide is the aim of a proposed three-year serial levy that voters will find on the March 30 ballot.

The \$4.4 million levy would establish a program similar to what the countywide library system now operates under. Rather than leaving the operation of individual senior centers up to local municipalities, the new levy would establish a distribution program for the operating costs of senior centers on a countywide basis.

Locally, the Sandy Senior Center would receive \$225,282 through June 1985. The Hoodland Senior Center would receive \$97,200 for operation of its facility during the same time period.

One goal of the proposal is to ensure that everyone in the county can use the senior center facilities. A countywide senior program levy make certain that everyone who does use the facility will pay the same cost for its operation.

The three-year serial levy is expected to provide a level of stability in services to seniors throughout Clackamas County, according to Sandy City Manager Roger Jordan.

"This will become all the more critical as the federal and state budgets are cut and the city receives less money from the federal government to operate the senior program, and as the demands on the city budget continue to increase, thus making money less available for each of our programs," he said.

Under the proposal, the Sandy Senior Center would continue to be operated through the city, in cooperation with the Senior Center Advisory Board. Daily administration of the Senior Center would not be much different than today.

The county does not propose to dictate policy at each of the 11 senior centers countywide. Rather, they would pass through a block of money which would ensure that the Senior Center and everyone who uses it is paying a proportionate share of the costs.

"We feel this is a great breakthrough in developing a more equitable and stabilized form of paying for the cost of operating a good senior center for our area's seniors," Jordan said.

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