

Fire or volcano? Oregon blaze sparks eruption comparisons

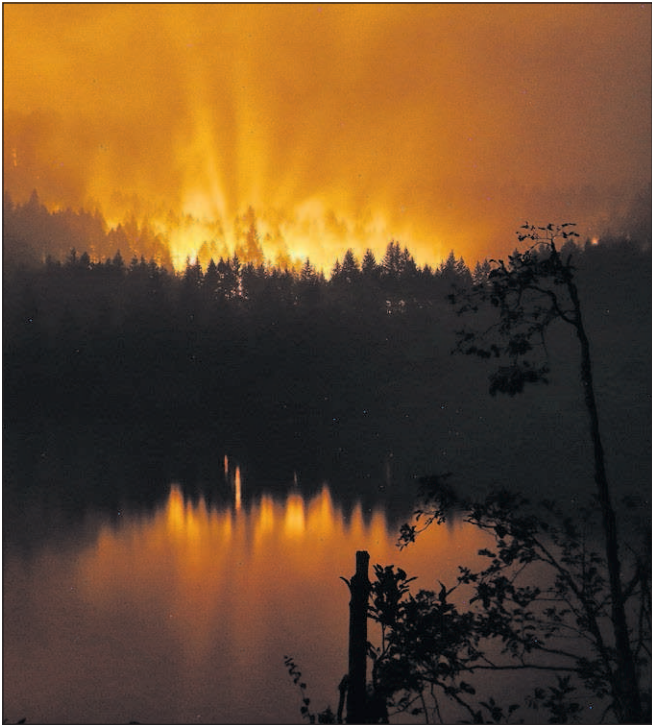
Health concerns from smoke and ash as fires burn

By GILLIAN FLACCUS and NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

TROUTDALE — People in Oregon covered their faces with scarves to keep choking ash from wildfires from filling their lungs and wiped the soot from windshields, similar to what long-time residents said they had to do in 1980 during the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens.

The growing blaze east of Portland, in the scenic Columbia River Gorge, was one of dozens of wildfires in western U.S. states that sent smoke into cities from Seattle to Denver — prompting health warnings and cancellations of outdoor activities for children by many school districts.

The 16-square mile fire east of Portland forced hundreds of home evacuations. And embers from the fire drifted across the Columbia River — sparking blazes in neighboring Washington state. People shielded their faces and authorities in the Northwest urged drivers to use headlights during the day to



Genna Martin/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

A wildfire continues to burn on the Oregon side of the Columbia River Gorge near Cascade Locks and the Bridge of the Gods. The wildfire shut down part of Interstate 84.

increase visibility.

“I haven’t seen ash fall like this in the Portland metro area in my 18 years as a firefighter,” said Damon Simmons, with the fire incident management team for the Oregon State Fire Marshal.

Joanna Fisher walked to work Tuesday at a Troutdale naturopathic clinic with Calla

Wanser, who was wearing a red bandana around her mouth.

“You can’t really stand outside without getting rained on” by ash, Fisher said.

The only comparison people could come up with was the eruption of Mount St. Helens in nearby southwest Washington more than 35 years ago.

“In 1980, we had a couple of

significant ash falls here in the Portland area and this is very reminiscent of what we saw in the ash fall in those days,” said Don Hamilton, a spokesman for the Oregon Department of Transportation. “The particulate matter that shows up on the cars, it gets in your hair, it gets in your eyes, it’s all over the place like it was in those days.”

A closure of one section of Interstate 84 because of thick smoke and falling ash was extended 30 miles east of Portland while the Coast Guard closed about 20 miles of the Columbia River in the same area.

The National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, a federal agency that coordinates wildfire-fighting, said 80 large fires were burning on 2,200 square miles in nine Western states.

A fast-moving wildfire in northern Utah swept down a canyon Tuesday morning — destroying structures, forcing evacuations and closing highways.

A least five homes burned and more than 1,000 people were evacuated as high winds fed the flames in the canyon north of Salt Lake City. Thick black smoke closed parts of two highways as firefighters struggled to fight the blaze fueled by winds gust at up to 40 mph.

In Washington state the U.S. Department of Defense agreed to assign 200 active-duty soldiers to help fight a wildfire.

Civilian firefighting commanders said Tuesday the soldiers from Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington, would undergo four days of training and then be sent to a complex of 14 wildfires in southern Oregon’s Umpqua National Forest that have burned 47 square miles.

And a wildfire near Mount Rainier National Park in Washington state grew to more than 29 square miles and heavy smoke blanketed many cities in Washington state. A portion of the park was closed.

Mandatory evacuations were called for the fire near Mount Rainier, including the Crystal Mountain ski resort, which closed Monday because of smoke.

The air quality in Spokane, Washington, was rated as hazardous Tuesday morning. The National Weather Service says it was likely to get worse as wind shifts bring in smoke from fires in Canada, Montana, Oregon and Washington.

Air quality alerts were issued for parts of Idaho as well.

In Oregon, people living in about 700 homes in and around the Columbia River Gorge

have been forced to evacuate. Others have been warned to get ready as flames burn trees and brush in one of the state’s biggest tourist attractions.

Authorities say they believe the blaze, which started Saturday, was caused by a 15-year-old boy and friends using fireworks. They’ve identified a suspect but have made no arrests.

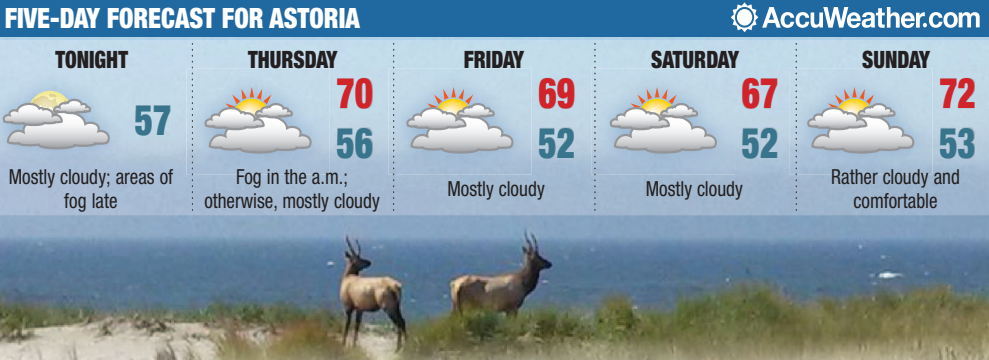
Gov. Kate Brown visited the fire scene Tuesday as ash fell around her.

The fire spread 13 miles in 16 hours, pushed by winds overnight that ranged from 30 mph to 40 mph in tinder-dry conditions, Brown said.

“It looks like there has been a devastating impact on the Gorge,” she said, speaking of the renowned Columbia River Gorge, famous for its hiking and spectacular vistas.

A total of 600 Oregon National Guard troops have been called up to fight more than a dozen blazes across Oregon, including a much larger blaze in southwest Oregon in a rural area along the California border.

Geranios reported from Spokane, Washington. Associated Press writers Phuong Le in Seattle, Matt Volz in Helena, Montana, and Sudhin Thanawala in San Francisco contributed to this report.



ALMANAC	
Astoria through Tuesday.	
Temperatures	
High/Low	72°/57°
Normal high/low	69°/51°
Record high	87° in 2014
Record low	43° in 1969
Precipitation	
Tuesday	0.00"
Month to date	0.00"
Normal month to date	0.30"
Year to date	50.06"
Normal year to date	38.40"

SUN AND MOON	
Sunset tonight	7:44 p.m.
Sunrise Thursday	6:44 a.m.
Moonrise today	8:15 p.m.
Moonset today	7:00 a.m.
Last	New
First	Full
Sep 12	Sep 19
Sep 27	Oct 5

UNDER THE SKY
Tonight's Sky: Full 'Corn' Moon at 12:03 a.m. The Harvest Moon will be on Oct. 5, nearest the autumnal equinox on Sept. 22.

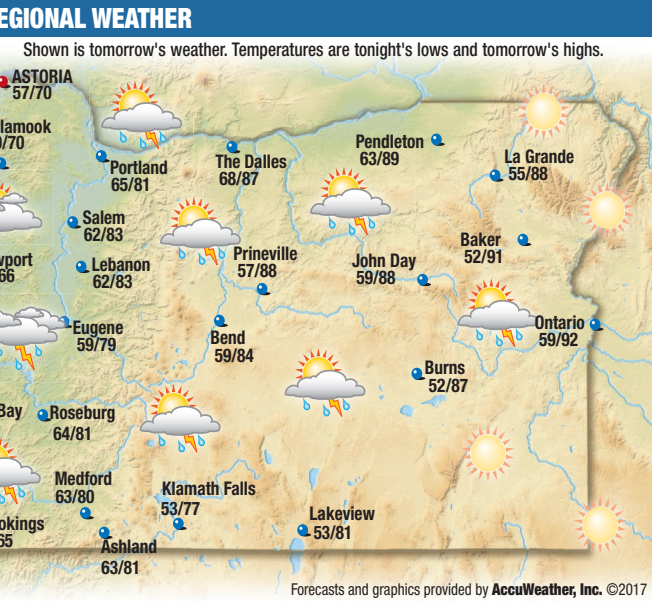
Source: Jim Todd, OMSI

TOMORROW'S TIDES			
Astoria / Port Docks			
Time	High	Time	Low
2:28 a.m.	8.3 ft.	8:54 a.m.	-0.6 ft.
3:05 p.m.	8.1 ft.	9:16 p.m.	0.3 ft.

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Hi	Lo	W	Th.	Lo	W
Atlanta	74	55	t	76	56	s	
Boston	76	63	r	74	58	r	
Chicago	65	52	pc	68	54	pc	
Denver	82	54	s	86	54	s	
Des Moines	70	49	s	78	54	s	
Detroit	68	50	pc	66	49	sh	
El Paso	90	66	s	92	67	s	
Fairbanks	66	44	c	62	40	pc	
Honolulu	88	75	pc	87	76	s	
Indianapolis	69	49	pc	71	52	pc	
Kansas City	71	49	s	76	57	s	
Las Vegas	102	79	pc	100	78	s	
Los Angeles	86	67	pc	85	66	pc	
Memphis	75	54	s	77	57	s	
Miami	90	79	t	92	81	t	
Nashville	74	51	s	75	53	s	
New Orleans	83	68	pc	83	67	s	
New York	74	60	r	74	58	sh	
Oklahoma City	77	54	s	82	60	s	
Philadelphia	72	60	r	74	58	pc	
St. Louis	70	52	s	76	56	s	
Salt Lake City	96	69	s	94	70	s	
San Francisco	77	65	pc	74	63	pc	
Seattle	85	63	pc	79	62	pc	
Washington, DC	68	59	r	75	58	pc	

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

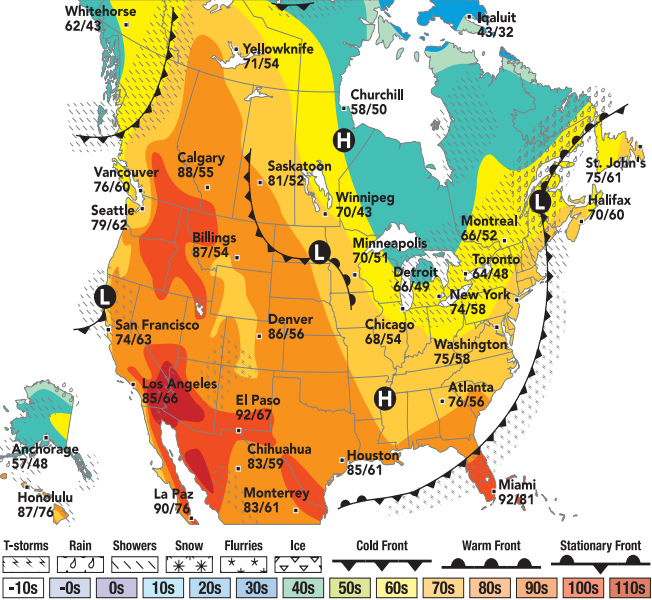


REGIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Hi	Lo	W	Th.	Lo	W
Baker City	94	52	pc	91	53	pc	
Bend	89	59	pc	84	55	t	
Brookings	70	59	c	66	58	c	
Eugene	84	59	pc	79	57	t	
Ilwaco	67	59	c	66	59	c	
Klamath Falls	85	53	pc	77	47	t	
Medford	89	63	pc	80	61	t	
Newberg	86	62	pc	83	60	pc	
Newport	68	56	c	66	55	c	
North Bend	70	57	c	67	55	c	

TOMORROW'S NATIONAL WEATHER

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



DEATHS

Sept. 5, 2017
GODWIN, Janet Christine, 95, of Warrenton, died in Wheeler. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary in Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

Sept. 4, 2017
THOMAS, Vadas Lucille, 84, of Seaside, died in Sea-

side. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory of Astoria/Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

BAUM, Joy Irene, 87, of Seaside, died in Seaside. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Service of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

ON THE RECORD

DUII
• At 8:06 p.m. Thursday, Tonja Kay Christian, 66, of Astoria, was arrested by the Warrenton Police Department on SE Second Street and charged with driving under the influence of intoxicants.
• At 5:08 a.m. Friday, Sean Gordon Holcombe, 34, of Astoria, was arrested by the Astoria Police Department on Shively Park Road and charged with DUII. His blood alcohol content was 0.16 percent.

• At 1:13 a.m. Saturday, William Pinkstaff, 24, of Astoria, was arrested by the Seaside Police Department at Prom and Oceanway Street and charged with DUII, recklessly endangering another person and resisting arrest.

• At 4:20 p.m. Monday, Robert Lagtry Robinson, 40, of Puyallup, Washington, was arrested by the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office near Sunset Beach and charged with DUII.

LOTTERIES

OREGON
Tuesday's Pick 4:
1 p.m.: 8-5-2-4
4 p.m.: 4-8-5-6
7 p.m.: 6-4-1-0
10 p.m.: 8-4-1-5
Tuesday's Lucky Lines: 04-08-12-15-18-23-25-32
Estimated jackpot: \$54,000
Tuesday's Mega Millions: 11-

17-59-70-72, Mega Ball: 1
Estimated jackpot: \$70 million

WASHINGTON
Tuesday's Daily Game: 2-1-5
Tuesday's Keno: 01-03-06-07-14-15-37-43-48-55-56-57-62-63-65-67-72-75-77-78
Tuesday's Match 4: 05-11-15-17

PUBLIC MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY
Warrenton Urban Renewal Agency-Warrenton Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, 3:30 p.m., joint meeting, City Hall, 225 S. Main St.
Seaside Improvement Commission, 6:30 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
Gearhart City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 698 Pacific Way.

THURSDAY
Northwest Oregon Housing Authority Board, 10 a.m., annual and regular board meeting, NOHA Office, 147 S. Main Ave., Warrenton.
Seaside Parks Advisory Committee, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

MEMORIAL

Saturday, Sept. 9
DIAMOND, Sali — Memorial and potluck from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Warrenton Community Center, 170 S.W. Third St., in Warrenton. Light refreshments, coffee and tea will be served. All are welcome.



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Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style. Death notices and upcoming services will be published at no charge. Notices must be submitted by 9 a.m. the day of publication.

Obituaries and notices may be submitted online at www.dailyastorian.com/forms/obits, by email at ewilson@dailyastorian.com, placed via the funeral home or in person at The Daily Astorian office, 949 Exchange St. in Astoria. For more information, call 503-325-3211, ext. 257.

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