

# the Astorian

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## FORESHADOW



Photos by Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

**TOP:** Few cars line the typically-packed Commercial Street in Astoria on Thursday evening after government restrictions to contain the spread of the coronavirus. **ABOVE LEFT:** An electronic message along U.S. Highway 101 near Warrenton reminds travelers of the dangers of COVID-19 and to avoid groups. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Alan Isaksen sanitizes a returned cart at the entrance to the Astoria Co-op on Thursday morning.

## Hospitals told to scale back to focus on virus

A move to preserve masks and gowns

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Astorian*

Fearing a critical shortage of surgical masks for health care workers caring for people with the coronavirus, Gov. Kate Brown ordered hospitals in Oregon to cease non-emergency procedures to conserve medical supplies. The order applies to hospi-

tals, outpatient clinics and other health care providers, such as dentists and veterinarians. Health care experts are worried about potential shortages of masks, gowns and gloves in a virus outbreak.

"It is critical that we preserve every piece of personal protective equipment we have in Oregon so that our health care workers can keep themselves safe while treating COVID-19 patients," Brown said in a statement Wednesday. "If we do not take immediate action, the surge in demand in our hospi-

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California, New York and other states issue stay at home orders.

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tals for masks, gowns and gloves will quickly outstrip the limited supplies they have available.

"We cannot let that happen. I want to thank the health care providers—including dentists, veterinarians and others—who have already preserved and donated

their critical supplies."

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee also moved to restrict non-emergency medical and dental procedures to conserve protective equipment for health care workers.

Brown's order also limits visits to hospitals to help protect health care workers and patients.

Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria and Providence Seaside Hospital are the most impacted on the North Coast.

Columbia Memorial stopped

all nonessential surgeries on Tuesday. "Personal protective equipment is obviously a great concern to all of us as we work to keep our community healthy," Nancee Long, the director of communications at the hospital, said in a text message.

Earlier Wednesday, in a message to patients and the community, Columbia Memorial had pledged that any changes to care, such as office visits and elective

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## 'This is really hurting us'

Seaside quiet as concerns about virus grow

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

SEASIDE — Spring break usually brings the first real rush of tourists to the coast.

But this time it's quiet. Many of the tourists who are visiting despite the coronavirus pandemic have to peek through shop windows to see who is still open.

Jimmy Griffin, the owner of Seaside Brewing Co., stood in his empty restaurant Thursday filling to-go orders while juggling other tasks. He said the restaurant and patio would typically be packed on a sunny spring afternoon.

After Gov. Kate Brown ordered restaurants and bars in Oregon to offer takeout-only as a precaution against the virus, Griffin spent the past few days updating his website and buying new marketing materials to advertise to-go options.

But now he thinks it won't be long until

Oregon follows California and New York and directs people to stay at home. "Financially, it's affecting me just as much as it is everyone else," Griffin said. "This is really hurting us."

But he believes taking precautions is better than the alternative if the pandemic is not contained.

"We're all going to have to make some sacrifices here," he said.

Griffin said he employed nearly 30 people before Monday. Other popular downtown restaurants, including Finn's Fish House, Twisted Fish Steakhouse and Sports Lounge and the Times Theatre & Public House, have closed. Some restaurants have managed to keep a few employees working by taking to-go orders and delivering.

"This isn't us trying to save money," Griffin said. "This is us now working 15 to 20-hour days, not because we're busy, but because we're trying to keep our businesses open so we can bring our people back."

"In a little town like this, a lot of us bleed all winter long so that we have our people around in spring and summer," he said. "Spring break is when we make some of that back ... It's not going to happen this year. So we're going to see a lot of real stressed businesses this year as a result of that."

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Nicole Bales/The Astorian

**Finn's Fish House is one of many restaurants in Seaside that are temporarily closed.**

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State closes campgrounds over virus.

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## Port could park cruise ships in limbo over virus

A potential source of new revenue

By EDWARD STRATTON  
*The Astorian*

With revenue decimated by a trade war with China and the coronavirus pandemic, the Port of Astoria could host cruise ships that need a place to park while global voyages are suspended.

"Cruise ships are in a scramble," said Will Isom, the Port's executive director. "They don't have dockage for all their vessels."

The Port is exploring the logistics of docking one or two cruise ships with skeleton crews along Pier 1, where dockage has been a major driver of the Port's operational revenue.

Revenue has dwindled since a trade war between the U.S. and China stopped log exports from Pier 1 by Astoria Forest Products. The company has since been trying to escape from its leases with the Port.

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