

GREATER GORGE

Pot vaping rates up sharply among high school students

By NEITA CECIL
The Dalles Chronicle

A 2019 state survey shows about 20 percent of Oregon 11th graders use marijuana, a rate unchanged from 2017, but one method of ingesting it, vaping, was up nearly 300 percent.

In Wasco and Sherman counties, the use of pot actually went down from 2017 to 2019 among 11th graders, from 22.6 percent to 16.8 percent. But among those pot users, the increase in vaping of THC, the ingredient in marijuana that produces a "high," went up a whopping 909 percent since 2017.

Vaping of THC was linked last fall to a national epidemic of lung injuries that have hospitalized over 2,700 people so far. Sixty people have died.

In 2017, just 3.3 percent of Wasco and Sherman teens re-

ported vaping THC. By 2019, it was 33.3 percent. Despite that huge increase, local vaping of THC is still below the state average, which went up from 11.2 percent of pot users in 2017 to 44.2 percent in 2019.

The survey also found that about 27 percent of Wasco and Sherman 11th graders had vaped in the past 30 days, which researchers consider an indication of regular use. Just four years ago, that number was 10 percent. That local number is higher than the state average of 21.4 percent.

The Oregon Healthy Teens Survey, which comes out every other year, asked 11th graders in Wasco and Sherman counties a range of health questions. The only school districts participating were North Wasco County School District 21 and Sherman County School District.

Vaping was declared an epi-

demic by the U.S. surgeon general in 2018, and last fall a vaping lung injury outbreak drew national attention, with reports of people being injured or dying from vaping.

Two students from The Dalles High School were taken to the hospital last fall after vaping, according to police logs.

The nationally reported tallies for vaping injuries include two deaths and 23 illnesses in Oregon.

Most cases were linked to the vaping of THC, particularly from informal sources like friends, family or online sources.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control found vitamin E acetate is strongly linked to the illness outbreak. Vitamin E acetate is an additive used by producers to increase their product.

Vaping devices heat a liquid to produce an aerosol that users in-

hale into their lungs. The devices come in a variety of sleek forms, from ones shaped like USB devices or flash drives to vape watches.

There are thousands of flavors of e-liquids, the vast majority of which contain nicotine, the same highly addictive ingredient found in cigarettes.

Other e-liquids contain THC.

Debbi Jones, Wasco County prevention specialist with YouthThink, said the data shows kids are taking advantage of new mechanisms for using pot, particularly vaping and dabs, which were the two highest increases locally. Dabs are highly concentrated, waxlike doses of THC that are heated, and the resulting smoke is inhaled.

"We don't have more kids using it, the kids that are have more ways to use it and abuse it," she said.

Steps like banning flavors of

vape "are really important because that's one of the easier ways for kids to get it. But we have to get ahead of it, the industry is always ahead of us," she said.

A bill in the Oregon Legislature would ban all flavored nicotine vapes. The ban wouldn't include marijuana vapes.

"At some point making money has to be less important than the health of our children, and that to me is the biggest challenge," Jones said.

"Anything addictive is all about, on the other side, some-

body making money, be it opioids, gambling, porn, you name it," she said.

The data from Wasco and Sherman counties are reported together because they are part of the three-county North Central Public Health District. Gilliam County is also in the district, but did not participate in the latest survey.

For more information on vaping, visit SmokefreeOregon.com or www.youthnow.me/schools.

Permit period in place for Dog Mtn. trail

The U.S. Forest Service released online permits on March 1 at www.recreation.gov for hikers headed to Dog Mountain on weekends from April 18 to June 14 this year.

The permits are required as part of a partnership that began in 2018 to ensure public safety near Dog Mountain Trailhead, USFS stated in a press release.

Every hiker on the Dog Mountain Trail system on Saturdays and Sundays between April 18 to June 14 will be required to carry a permit (or digital proof).

More details about the permit system and related shuttle are available at fs.usda.gov/goto/crgnsa/hikedogmountain.

There are two ways for hikers to obtain permits:

- **Ride the shuttle from Stevenson.** A permit is included automatically with the cost of the Skamania County West End Transit bus from Skamania Fairgrounds in Stevenson. Seats are available on a first come, first served basis, for \$1 per person per trip, or \$2 round trip (cash, exact change only). Each permit

is good for one individual on the day it is issued. The shuttle runs about every half hour from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends from April 18 to June 14.

- **Reserve a permit online.**

Anyone parking at Dog Mountain Trailhead will need to reserve one permit for each person online at www.recreation.gov and pay the \$1 non-refundable administrative fee (per person) in

addition to paying the recreation site fee of \$5 per car.

This year, 100 permits will be released for each day through the permit season. The permit system is designed to limit congestion, but a permit does not guarantee a parking spot will be available at the time a hiker arrives, so visitors are encouraged to carpool.



File photo

DOG MOUNTAIN Trail vista, Wind Mountain, just to the west.

Horizon Christian School invites you to an:

OPEN HOUSE

FREE PANCAKE BREAKFAST
Saturday, March 14th
8:30-11:00am

Classroom & Student Activities Expo
Bilingual Campus Tours
Kindergarten Roundup 9:30-10:30a

700 Pacific Ave - Hood River, OR
541.387.3200

SUDOKU

This week's Sudoku is presented by:

Your Business Name

	1				2		3
		4		5			6
		3	7	2	8		4
	8		5	4			
4	3						1 5
				6	9		8
3			9	7	5	8	
	6			1		9	
7		2					4

Fill in all 81 squares on the puzzle with numbers 1 to 9. You can use each number 1-9 only once in each nine square section, in each horizontal line of nine squares, and in each vertical column of nine squares. The puzzle is completed when you correctly fill every square.

Advertise Your Business or Service Here
541-386-1234

SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN 2020 SALES KIDS

Hurry! SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN ENDS MARCH 14TH.

Jaeden Anderson
541-261-0889
THE DALLES

Hailey Betts
541-386-6695
HOOD RIVER

Ryan Betts
541-386-6695
HOOD RIVER

Adrianna Brink
541-490-8388
HOOD RIVER

Wyatt Burkhart
541-490-9535
HOOD RIVER

Johnny Cloud
541-400-0913
THE DALLES

Rohan Faber
541-399-0730
HOOD RIVER

Kaylee Gross
541-399-2282
HOOD RIVER

Siena Gross
971-871-8010
HOOD RIVER

Hailey Harjo
541-571-2461
HOOD RIVER

Tyson Harjo
541-571-2461
HOOD RIVER

Forrest Hedberg
541-387-5571
HOOD RIVER

Gretchen Hedberg
541-387-5571
HOOD RIVER

Ava Piacente
971-330-1242
THE DALLES

Ben Tama
503-828-8448
HOOD RIVER

Pavlik Zavadsky
206-550-8286
HOOD RIVER

Pick your favorite SALES KID, list him or her on the coupon below and send in your subscription today. **SAVE OVER 50% per year** over newsstand prices and the paper will be delivered! Plus, the Sales Kid you choose will earn cash.

Kids compete for a chance to win the Grand Prize:
\$1000
1ST PLACE PRIZE

YES, I want to subscribe.

ENCLOSED: Check Cash Visa/MC exp. _____ cvv _____

Please enter my NEW RENEWAL Subscription to the Hood River News

1 YEAR PRINT (in Hood River Area 25 miles or less) **\$45.00**

2 YEARS PRINT (in Hood River Area 25 miles or less) **\$70.00**

1 YEARS PRINT (outside Hood River Area 25+ miles) **\$71.00**

Hood River News
Please mail this coupon along with your payment to Hood River News, PO Box 390, Hood River, OR 97031

CREDIT POINTS TO SALES KID

Please return this form to make sure your sales kid receives credit. This form must be in by March 14th.

\$100 Gift card

Subscriber Drawing

*One (1) gift card worth \$100.00 will be awarded from a random drawing of the new or renewing subscribers during the 2020 Kids Subscription Campaign: Feb 20th, 2020 through March 14th, 2020.