

# Coronavirus Threat Grows

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Snohomish County, state health officials said. Across the U.S., 118 people have been diagnosed with the disease.

Monday, King County Executive Dow Constantine issued an emergency declaration for what has become the epicenter of a coronavirus outbreak in Washington state, where there are now a total of 18 cases: 14 in King County and another four in Snohomish County. Constantin said the county is buying a local motel where patients with mild symptoms, or those who require isolation pending confirmation, can be housed and free up space at hospitals for more critical patients. Workers will also set up modular housing to house people throughout the county, he said.

Oregon's first presumptive case of coronavirus was an adult who worked at Forest Hills Elementary in Lake Oswego and may have exposed students and staff at the school. The person has been isolated and is being treated in a local hospital and the school will reopen later this week after being closed for deep cleaning.

A second case reported involved a Washington County adult who was a 'household contact' with the first person with coronavirus. The adult did not require medical attention and is isolated at home, authorities said.

The third presumptive case of exposure involves a casino worker who attended a youth basketball game at a middle school



PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Near empty shelves of toilet paper are seen Monday at the Natural Grocers on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard as shortages of everyday supplies are becoming common sights at Portland area stores as people prepare to stay at home if they get sick or find the spread of the coronavirus gets much worse.

in Umatilla County, the Oregonian reported, and quoted Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state's health officer, as saying that while

the virus will continue to spread in Oregon, the health system is prepared.

Others are making preparations at the

local level, and on Monday, just before the start of a Meals on Wheels lunch at the Urban League of Portland's Multicultural Senior Center on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, staff member Kashea Kilson Anderson gave safety tips on how to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

"People are generally concerned but not too worried," he said, as he told about 50 seniors of precautions that are becoming common knowledge, "to wash your hands often, to not touch your face, stay home if you feel sick, and call your doctor if you have symptoms."

Portland Public Schools also lists precautions to take that include washing your hands often with warm water and soap, and covering your mouth with a tissue, sleeve, or elbow (not hands) when you cough or sneeze, and then to wash your hands. If you or someone in your household is sick, you should stay home and follow the guidance of your healthcare provider. Keep your immune system strong by eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep and regular exercise, and by taking care of underlying health conditions.

Other tips, including how to deep clean and when to wear a mask, are offered on the Multnomah County website at multco.us/novel-coronavirus-covid-19.

As the country watches to see how the epidemic plays out – or whether it becomes a pandemic – Okamnor said she is particularly worried that young people like her 21-year-old son are not showing enough concern and are unprepared for what comes next. "As a Christian, I'm not looking for another Renaissance, but I'm in survival mode," she said. "I have my faith and I pray."

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