

Snowstorm threatens to paralyze crowded Northeast



AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews
Pedestrians walk through wind-swept snow in downtown Brooklyn, Monday. More than 35 million people along the northeast corridor rushed to get home and settle in Monday as a fearsome storm swirled in with the potential for hurricane-force winds and 1 to 3 feet of snow that could paralyze the Northeast for days.

NEW YORK (AP) — Tens of millions of people along the Philadelphia-to-Boston corridor rushed to get home and settle in Monday as a fearsome storm swirled in with the potential for hurricane-force winds and 1 to 3 feet of snow that could paralyze the Northeast for days.

Snow was coating cars and building up on sidewalks and roadways in New York City by evening, and light snow was falling in Boston. Forecasters said the storm would build into a blizzard, and the brunt of it would hit late Monday and into Tuesday.

As the snow got heavier, much of the region rushed to shut down.

More than 7,700 flights in and out of the Northeast were canceled, and many of them may not take off again until Wednesday. Schools and businesses let out early. Government offices closed. Shoppers stocking up on food jammed supermarkets and elbowed one another for what was left. Broadway stages went dark.

"It's going to be ridiculous out there, frightening," said postal deliveryman Peter Hovey, standing on a snowy commuter train platform in White Plains, New York.

All too aware that big snowstorms can make or break politicians, governors and mayors moved quickly to declare emergencies and order

the shutdown of streets and highways to prevent travelers from getting stranded and to enable plows and emergency vehicles to get through.

"This will most likely be one of the largest blizzards in the history of New York City," New York Mayor Bill de Blasio warned.

He urged New Yorkers to go home and stay there, adding: "People have to make smart decisions from this point on."

Commuters like Sameer Navi, 27, of Long Island, were following the advice.

Navi, who works for Citigroup in Manhattan, said he takes the Long Island Rail Road every day and left work early Monday after warnings

by local officials to get home before the brunt of the storm. "I did leave earlier than usual," he said. "Penn Station less crowded than I thought it would be so I'm guessing people left earlier or didn't go to work today."

Up to now, this has been a largely snow-free winter in the urban Northeast. But this storm threatened to make up the difference in a single blow.

Boston was expected to get 2 to 3 feet of snow, New York 1½ to 2 feet and Philadelphia more than a foot.

The National Weather Service issued a blizzard warning for a 250-mile swath of the region, meaning heavy, blowing snow and potential whiteout conditions.

Kitzhaber seeks \$30M for welfare fix

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber and Democratic lawmakers want to spend \$30 million over the next biennium to tackle problems with the state's welfare program.

Shortcomings in the program have undermined the state's ability to get people back to work, according to an April 2014 performance audit by the Secretary of State's office that is the basis for Kitzhaber's spending proposal.

Auditors found that the state lagged behind other states in helping aid recipients become more self-sufficient according to several federal performance measures, and the problem increased after lawmakers cut spending on support services during the recession. For example, Oregon ranked lowest in the nation in the last federal comparison in 2010 with approximately 8 percent of welfare recipients who worked or participated in "work-related activities."

As the economy rebounded in the last two years, the number of Oregon households that receive cash payments known as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, or TANF, has declined by approximately 5,300, from a peak caseload of 36,140 in 2012. The state would likely end up spending

\$41.6 million less on the program over the next two-year budget cycle according to the Department of Human Services, but Kitzhaber and key Democratic lawmakers said they want to spend \$30 million to improve the program. House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, confirmed that the spending plan was included in the framework drafted by the budget-writing Joint Ways and Means Committee, which will serve as a starting point for budget bills in the 2015 legislative session.

The Department of Human Services would spend the money in three areas, agency director Erinn Kelley-Siel said in a recent interview. People who receive cash through TANF are supposed to search for work or participate in other activities that will help them become more self-sufficient. DHS would use some of the money in the governor's proposal to invest in more support services, such as childcare and mental health services, to help people who receive TANF get ready to re-enter the workforce. The number of TANF cases in Oregon nearly doubled during the recession, and lawmakers had to decide how to respond. The Legislature cut spending on services that helped families transition to self-sufficiency, in an effort to provide cash assistance to more

needy families.

"Oregon's service cuts for clients with addictions or mental and physical health barriers to work have also made it harder to reduce cases," the auditors wrote.

Kelley-Siel said in order to be successful, Oregonians in the TANF program often need more than the cash assistance and job training they currently receive.

"What we know is if a family's in crisis or they're not housed, or they're not able to get work, etc., etc., taking a training course to ultimately become employed isn't as good an investment as it could be if we were able to provide some support additionally to a family," Kelley-Siel said.

Another TANF reform in the spending plan would smooth the transition for families that find work, so they can earn more money before they lose the cash payments.

At the time of the audit, Oregon stopped payments when a single parent with two children earned \$617 a month, much lower than California at \$1,387 and Washington at \$954.

"In our case reviews, we found clients quickly losing their entire TANF payment after entering minimum-wage, part-time jobs," auditors wrote.

In one case, the mother of a four-month-old baby was kicked out of the program because she worked two part-

time jobs, as a hotel housekeeper and a coffee shop server. Lawmakers have not yet specified how they would change the program cut-off.

Kelley-Siel described the third area targeted for spending as a broad initiative to retrain DHS caseworkers and develop an "accountable TANF program."

State auditors found that even before recessionary budget cuts, case managers often did not contact welfare recipients for months or even more than a year. In one case, there was no documented check-in for more than two years with a mother of five, who was living with a registered sex offender in a home described as "below community standards," according to auditors.

Auditors also identified successful case managers and suggested DHS could use some of their techniques as a model for other case managers. Kelley-Siel said DHS is already addressing some of these issues.

Some problems cited in the audit are not included in the state spending proposal.

Auditors found that Oregon lagged far behind Washington and California in its use of data, both to track TANF participants' progress toward self-sufficiency and to identify medical and other problems that might need to be resolved before someone could work.

BRIEFLY

Oregon had worst 2013 high school graduation rate

PORTLAND (AP) — Oregon has nowhere to go but up when it releases the graduation rate for the class of 2014 on Thursday.

A U.S. Department of Education report shows Oregon's 69 percent graduation rate for the class of 2013 was worst among the 49 states able to calculate their rates in the way required by the federal government.

State education officials acknowledge rates are too low. But they say definitions and requirements aren't identical from state to state, so comparisons should be made with caution.

The Oregonian reports the state is expanding the definition of who is a high school graduate to be more inclusive, beginning with the class of 2014. For example, students awarded modified

diplomas were considered completers, not graduates, in 2013. That will change Thursday.

New state mental hospital opening in Junction City

EUGENE (AP) — An open house is scheduled Thursday for the new \$84 million state psychiatric hospital at Junction City.

The Register-Guard reports the first patients are expected in March. It eventually will serve up to 174 patients with a staff of 330 employees.

The Junction City hospital will serve patients in the southern Willamette Valley and southern Oregon, while the Oregon State Hospital in Salem remains the main state hospital for people who have been civilly committed or who have pleaded guilty except for insanity.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases.

Corrections

Steven Grangood, who Pendleton police reported is a member of the United Aryan Empire gang, is 22 years old. The East Oregonian reported his age inaccurately. The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

www.eastoregonian.com

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East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and Dec. 25, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.
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Single copy price:
\$1 Tuesday through Friday, \$1.50 Saturday

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To submit a Letter to the Editor: mail to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mild with clouds and sun	Mostly cloudy and mild	Intervals of clouds and sunshine	Partly sunny	Sun and areas of high clouds

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
52°	40°	51°	37°	45°
34°	45°	34°	46°	33°
45°	34°	45°	34°	47°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
52°	38°	53°	37°	47°
32°	47°	34°	47°	32°
47°	32°	47°	32°	47°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	38°	32°
Normals	43°	28°
Records	67° (1934)	-18° (1957)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.72"
Normal month to date 1.21"
Year to date 0.72"
Last year to date 0.38"
Normal year to date 1.21"

HERMISTON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	39°	37°
Normals	43°	29°
Records	67° (2003)	-31° (1957)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.44"
Normal month to date 1.08"
Year to date 0.44"
Last year to date 0.27"
Normal year to date 1.08"

SUN AND MOON

	Full	Last	New	First
Feb 3	Feb 11	Feb 18	Feb 25	

Coastal Oregon: A little rain across the north today; times of clouds and sun elsewhere.
Eastern and Central Oregon: Mostly cloudy today; a passing shower in the south in the afternoon.
Western Washington: Mostly cloudy today. A little rain; arriving in the afternoon across the south.
Eastern Washington: Variable cloudiness today; dense fog in the morning. Areas of fog late tonight.
Cascades: Mild today with times of clouds and sun. Partly cloudy tonight. Mainly cloudy tomorrow.
Northern California: Mostly cloudy today. A snow shower in the interior mountains; cooler in central parts.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	54	42	r	56	42	c
Baker City	44	30	c	44	27	c
Bend	55	32	pc	52	31	c
Brookings	58	47	pc	58	44	c
Burns	48	29	c	50	27	c
Enterprise	49	33	c	47	30	c
Eugene	57	42	c	58	41	c
Heppner	55	39	pc	53	35	c
Hermiston	52	38	pc	53	37	c
John Day	51	31	c	48	31	c
Klamath Falls	53	31	c	53	27	c
La Grande	50	36	c	50	31	c
Meacham	51	34	pc	47	30	c
Medford	57	38	pc	56	35	c
Newport	55	48	c	57	44	c
North Bend	58	46	pc	60	44	c
Ontario	41	33	c	45	32	c
Pasco	49	34	pc	51	37	c
Pendleton	52	40	pc	51	37	c
Portland	53	44	c	55	41	c
Redmond	58	33	pc	55	29	c
Salem	57	45	c	59	41	c
Spokane	45	33	c	41	34	c
Ukiah	54	34	pc	50	33	c
Vancouver	53	43	c	55	39	c
Walla Walla	49	41	pc	50	37	c
Yakima	52	34	pc	51	33	c

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	35	16	s	33	20	pc
Hong Kong	71	61	pc	70	61	pc
Jerusalem	62	46	c	56	37	pc
London	47	40	pc	51	35	r
Mexico City	73	42	s	73	40	s
Moscow	23	20	c	25	20	pc
Paris	44	35	pc	47	37	r
Rome	51	39	pc	52	35	s
Seoul	30	14	s	33	19	s
Sydney	72	67	r	75	62	r
Tokyo	59	37	sh	44	33	sn

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Wednesday
Boardman	W 3-6	NNE 3-6
Pendleton	W 4-8	NW 3-6

UV INDEX TODAY

0 1 1 1 0 0

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.

0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

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

National Summary: The Blizzard of 2015 will unload heavy snow, bring high winds and shut down travel from the upper mid-Atlantic coast to New England today. Clouds and showers are in store for many areas west of the Rockies.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 80° in Santa Ana, Calif. Low -25° in Saranac Lake, N.Y.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Wed.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	60	35	pc	60	33	s
Atlanta	49	30	s	52	34	s
Atlanta City	32	21	sn	33	19	s
Baltimore	37	18	sf	34	18	s
Billingham	63	42	s	53	28	c
Birmingham	51	28	s	53	36	pc
Boise	45	33	c	45	33	c
Boston	28	16	sn	26	11	pc
Charleston, SC	52	30	s	49	29	s
Charleston, WV	28	17	sf	33	23	pc
Chicago	32	20	pc	36	31	pc
Cleveland	23	9	c	27	19	s
Dallas	72	47	r	76	53	r
Denver	68	39	pc	57	31	s
Detroit	25	10	pc	26	20	pc
El Paso	67	40	s	70	40	pc
Fairbanks	-25	-34	s	-20	-31	s
Fargo	40	29	s	39	21	c
Honolulu	79	66	r	80	65	pc
Houston	74	46	r	72	53	s
Indianapolis	32	16	pc	37	30	pc
Jacksonville	59	35	s	54	32	s
Kansas City	54	37	r	67	38	s
Las Vegas	64	48	sh	65	47	c
Little Rock	63	36	s	62	50	c
Los Angeles	74	54	pc	74	54	c
Louisville	40	22	pc	43	35	pc
Memphis	53	34	s	56	47	pc
Miami	71	54	pc	68	56	s
Millwaukee	31	20	pc	35	31	pc
Minneapolis	36	27	pc	39	29	c
Nashville	45	25	pc	48	37	pc
New Orleans	66	44	s	61	46	s
New York City	26	17	sn	29	15	s
Oklahoma City	75	48	s	77	46	s
Omaha	54	34	s	61	34	s
Philadelphia	31	16	sn	32	12	s
Phoenix	73	54	c	75	54	pc
Portland, ME	22	14	sn	26	3	sn
Providence	24	15	sn	24	9	pc
Raleigh	45	26	c	46	25	s
Rapid City	65	40	s	56	30	c
Reno	53	33	sh	55	30	c
Sacramento	62	46	c	63	45	c
St. Louis	45	31	pc	52	46	pc
Salt Lake City	48	37	sh	47		