



Andy Nelson/The Register-Guard via AP

Winter storms return this weekend

Todd Hogan, a driver with System Transport, removes chains after crossing Willamette Pass, near Oakridge on Thursday. Heavy snow fell on the pass making chains mandatory for trucks. The National Weather Service advised several Pacific storm systems will move through the area this weekend, beginning Friday night. Each of the storms will bring rain and mountain snow. Snow levels will vary from 2,500 to 5,000 feet through the period, but significant accumulations will be likely over the higher elevations.

Regulators seek to reduce child pot poisoning

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — When it comes to protecting children from marijuana exposures, Oregon regulators are stepping into relatively new territory.

“The problem is the drug is in food products that are attractive and palatable,” said Dr. George Sam Wang, a physician and medical toxicologist at Children’s Hospital Colorado.

From gummy bears to brownies, “no other prescription drug comes in all of these food products,” Wang noted.

Scant research exists on safe levels for children. Colorado and Washington — Oregon’s only predecessors in legalization of recreational marijuana — have no data collection system to track the total number of kids who go to the emergency room with an overdose. Oregon regulators have gleaned a small amount of evidence from voluntary reports to Colorado poison control on

what levels of THC — the intoxicant in pot — are dangerous to children.

Oregon, now in the thick of rulemaking for pot edibles, may have something to learn from trailing Colorado on the road to legalization, said Dr. Rob Hendrickson, medical toxicologist and associate medical director for Oregon Poison Control.

Hendrickson is embarking on a study to calculate safe amounts of THC per kilogram of a child’s body weight. He is relying on voluntary reports of child exposure to come up with data for the study.

“Right now, there is no way to screen emergency room visits so I am going to encourage ERs to contact us about any marijuana exposure, how much was consumed, how it was packaged and how did they get into (it) and come up with a safe amount,” he said.

The outcome of the study could help inform decisions on THC limits when Oregon sets permanent rules for edibles

next year, including limits on THC doses and servings per package. The THC limits apply only to recreational marijuana. Medical marijuana has no limits on dosage.

The limit is important because voluntary reports to Colorado poison control show that the number of children, ages 0-5, exposed to THC more than tripled between 2009 and 2013. There were seven reports of children exposed to THC in 2009, the year medical cannabis was legalized, and 24 reports in 2013 when Colorado voters approved recreational use.

Hendrickson plans to model his study after research on a pharmaceutical THC drug, which was used for chemotherapy-related nausea well before medical marijuana was legalized.

Researchers looked how much THC a patient could tolerate and came up with a number calculated through a formula based on body surface area. A dosage of more than 4 mg per square

meters of surface area caused an 86 percent rate of adverse effects, including sleepiness, paranoia and fast heart rate, Hendrickson said.

“The really disgusting way to think it is that if you peeled off someone’s skin and figured out how much square meters it took up,” Hendrickson said.

From that, Hendrickson calculated that a dose of 10 mg (the limit in Colorado) would produce symptoms in a 2- to 4-year-old. His study will yield safe doses for each kilogram of a child’s weight.

The Oregon Health Authority has approached edible goods with greater caution than its predecessors in legalization.

In temporary rules approved Nov. 13, the health authority set a limit of 5 mg of THC per serving of edible marijuana, half the amount allowed in Colorado and Washington State. Up to 10 servings are allowed in one package of edibles. The temporary rules take effect April 1.

Faced with a fee, Oregon reconsiders health exchange

PORTLAND (AP) — With a new fee for some states using the federal health insurance portal on the horizon, Oregon says it’s looking into running its own exchange again, but with another state’s software.

Oregon officials say they’re planning to solicit proposals this month for technology that’s successfully running an existing health insurance exchange.

The move would be an interesting twist for Oregon, which ditched its problem-plagued Cover Oregon portal last spring and switched to the federal website. Oregonians now use HealthCare.Gov to enroll in coverage, but the state continues to certify insurance plans, do community outreach and education.

The proposed fee concerns four states including Oregon that run federally supported state-based marketplaces. Nevada, New Mexico and Hawaii also abandoned their exchanges due to technology fiascos and switched to the federal portal, but have retained some state functions.

The proposed user fee of 3 percent of the monthly premiums would be paid by insurance carriers who offer plans in those states via HealthCare.Gov. Carriers are expected to pass the new costs on to consumers in the form of higher premiums.

The Department of Health and Human Services says the fee covers the costs of running the federal IT platform. A reduced fee rate of 1.5 percent is being considered for the 2017 benefit year to ease the transition for states, said spokesman Aaron Albright.

The government already charges a 3.5 percent fee on premiums in states that rely on HealthCare.Gov and other services. States that run their own exchange portals don’t have federal user fees — but may charge carriers their own fees.

In Oregon, where insurers lost millions on claims over the past two years because they set their rates too low, the new fee could be another setback. Earlier this year, carriers whose medical claims costs were higher than expected were told they would get only a fraction of the money promised under a federal program to help stabilize premiums.

As a result, Oregonians enrolling in plans for 2016 are facing some of the highest rate increases in the country — and rates could reach even higher with the new fee, officials said.

The 3 percent fee means a total cost of \$13 million per year for all the carriers, said Patrick Allen, director of Oregon’s Department of Consumer and Business Services. That’s a high amount, considering Oregon already charges carriers a 2.9 percent fee on premiums for certifying plans, community outreach and other services.

“We always knew the federal government would propose a fee, we knew it wouldn’t be free forever,” Allen said.

The state, he said, isn’t looking to develop an exchange website from scratch like it did with the failed Cover Oregon process. Oregon is fighting in court with its contractor Oracle Corp. to recoup millions it paid the tech giant to construct the glitch-filled exchange.

Corrections

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.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
47° 40°	44° 33°	40° 29°	40° 30°	40° 29°
47° 42°	45° 36°	45° 28°	43° 31°	42° 31°

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE

HIGH	LOW
Yesterday 52°	38°
Normals 39°	26°
Records 67° (1924)	-10° (1932)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace
Month to date	1.36"
Normal month to date	0.51"
Year to date	9.17"
Last year to date	11.04"
Normal year to date	11.98"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE

HIGH	LOW
Yesterday 53°	30°
Normals 40°	28°
Records 69° (2014)	-14° (1932)

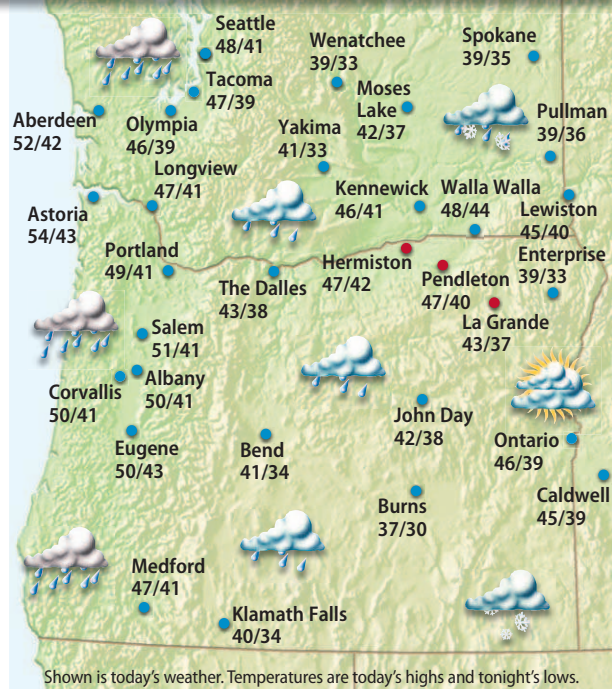
PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"
Month to date	0.91"
Normal month to date	0.57"
Year to date	6.30"
Last year to date	6.60"
Normal year to date	9.04"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:26 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:11 p.m.
Moonrise today	8:13 a.m.
Moonset today	5:54 p.m.

First	Full	Last	New
Dec 18	Dec 25	Jan 1	Jan 9



REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Windy today with heavy rain. Rain of varying rates tonight; watch for flooding.
Eastern and Central Oregon: Cloudy today with a little rain; however, dry in the upper Treasure Valley.
Western Washington: Rain arriving in the late morning. Periods of rain tonight. Occasional rain tomorrow.
Eastern Washington: Rain across the south, the Cascades and central sections today; snow in the north. Snow and rain near the Idaho border.
Cascades: Snow today, accumulating 1-3 inches, except rain across the north.
Northern California: A little rain today, except a bit of snow in the interior mountains.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sun.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	54	43	r	50	39	r
Baker City	41	35	c	39	26	r
Bend	41	34	r	37	23	r
Brookings	51	47	r	49	37	r
Burns	37	30	r	38	21	sn
Enterprise	39	33	c	37	26	sn
Eugene	50	43	r	46	35	r
Heppner	44	37	r	41	31	sh
Hermiston	47	42	r	45	36	r
John Day	42	38	r	41	28	r
Klamath Falls	40	34	r	41	25	sn
La Grande	43	37	c	40	28	sn
Mecham	39	34	c	37	28	sn
Medford	47	41	r	47	32	r
Newport	52	43	r	47	39	r
North Bend	55	46	r	50	39	r
Ontario	45	39	c	48	33	r
Pasco	47	41	r	46	34	c
Pendleton	47	40	r	44	33	r
Portland	49	41	r	46	36	r
Redmond	42	38	r	41	29	r
Salem	51	41	r	46	34	r
Spokane	39	35	c	41	28	c
Ukiah	39	35	r	37	26	sn
Vancouver	49	41	r	45	36	r
Walla Walla	48	44	c	47	35	r
Yakima	41	33	r	44	27	c

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Sun.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	41	24	pc	42	30	c
Hong Kong	74	68	pc	75	67	pc
Jerusalem	56	42	pc	48	40	sh
London	54	46	c	52	45	c
Mexico City	73	49	pc	67	44	sh
Moscow	33	30	sf	34	28	sf
Paris	51	40	pc	48	36	pc
Rome	59	39	s	58	45	pc
Seoul	47	30	s	47	33	s
Sydney	75	66	pc	79	67	pc
Tokyo	56	48	pc	54	50	r

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Sunday
Boardman	SSW 3-6	WNW 6-12
Pendleton	S 7-14	NW 10-20

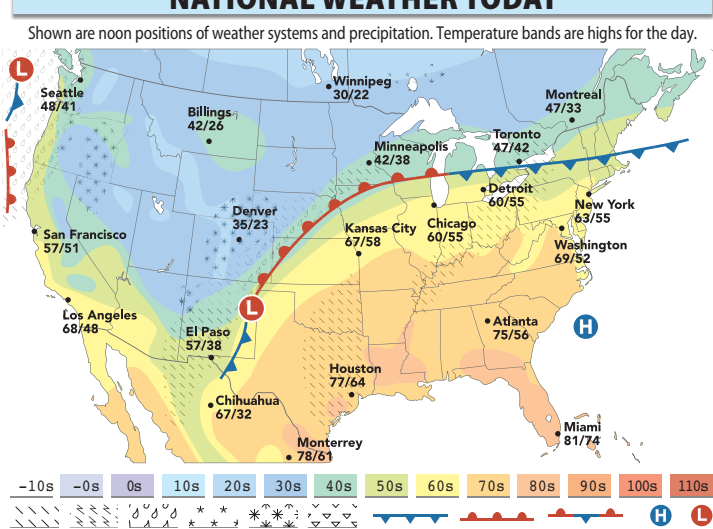
UV INDEX TODAY

0	0	1	0	0	0
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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.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. © 2015

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



National Summary: Showers will dot the Ohio Valley today with severe storms for the southern Plains late. Rain and snow will extend from New Mexico to Nebraska as heavy rain and mountain snow return to the Northwest.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 88° in Brady, Texas Low -3° in Daniel, Wyo.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Sun.				Today			Sun.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W		Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	48	27	sh	46	27	s	Louisville	71	59	c	71	53	pc
Atlanta	75	56	pc	73	60	pc	Memphis	77	65	c	73	49	t
Atlanta City	65	53	pc	65	54	pc	Miami	81	74	pc	82	73	pc
Baltimore	68	47	pc	67	51	pc	Millwaukee	52	46	c	58	50	r
Billings	42	26	s	46	34	c	Minneapolis	42	38	sh	44	34	r
Birmingham	76	59	pc	75	53	pc	Nashville	73	59	c	75	52	pc
Boise	43	39	sf	45	31	r	New Orleans	78	66	c	79	53	t
Boston	56	45	c	53	44	sh	New York City	63	55	pc	68	56	pc
Charleston, SC	78	55	pc	79	61	sh	Oklahoma City	72	48	t	56	35	r
Chicago	60	55	c	61	50	r	Omaha	54	45	sh	48	37	s
Cleveland	65	56	c	66	58	pc	Philadelphia	68	53	pc	69	57	pc
Dallas	75	55	c	63	44	sh	Phoenix	61	45	pc	62	44	s
Denver	35	23	sh	43	31	r	Portland, ME	53	35	pc	49	33	c
Detroit	60	55	c	63	54	c	Providence	61	43	c	57	44	pc
El Paso	57	38	sh	56	34	s	Raleigh	75	53	pc	75	58	pc
Fairbanks	-5	-18	c	-6	-10	pc	Reno City	37	19	pc			