

# Oregon officials plan to spray 8,000 acres in Portland to stop Asian gypsy moths

## Spraying will take place next spring

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**  
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Oregon farm regulators plan to spray more than 8,000 acres in Portland next spring to prevent the establishment of the Asian gypsy moth, a destructive pest found in the area this year.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture plans to first conduct extensive outreach before applying *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a biological pesticide that destroys the insect's ability to digest.

"This is a pretty significant deal for us, especially since we will have to apply the Bt aerially around Portland," said Katy Coba, ODA's director, during a Dec. 16 meeting of the Oregon Board of Agriculture in Portland.

The treatment is sensitive as it could provoke a negative public reaction in the populated urban area that would interfere with the ability to fight the pest, said Clint Burfitt, manager of OFA's insect pest prevention program.

"There's a short oppor-

tunity to mitigate the AGM threat before it spreads," he said.

The cost of spraying will likely involve several aircraft and the Oregon portion of the project is expected to cost \$2.5 million, Burfitt said.

Spraying will also occur in southwest Washington at a cost of \$3 million, he said.

This year the moths were found on the Washington and Oregon sides of the Columbia River.

In Oregon, eradication will likely begin in mid-April and involve three treatments one week apart, pending an environmental assessment and public outreach, Burfitt said.

Oregon has asked the federal government to fully pay for the spraying, but ODA will also request funding from the state legislature early next year in case the federal funds don't cover the entire expense, said Coba.

The eradication project is the third largest in Oregon's history, said Helmuth Rogg, director of Oregon's plant program area.

## Asian gypsy moth



Adult male  
Courtesy of en.wikipedia.org

**Binomial name:** *Lymantria dispar asiatica*

**Appearance:** Adult males have grayish-brown wings with darker bands and a wingspan of 1 1/2 inches. Adult females are white and much larger with a wingspan of 3 1/2 inches.

**Diet:** More than 600 species of trees and shrubs, including larch, oak, poplar, alder, willow and some evergreens.

**Life cycle:** Four stages; egg, larva, pupa and moth. Eggs are laid between June-September and remain dormant through winter to hatch the following spring.

**Origin:** Far East countries such as China, Russia and Japan.

**First observed in N. America:** 1991 near Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Source: USDA APHIS

Capital Press graphic

Asian gypsy moths have previously been intercepted in Oregon in 1992, 2000 and 2006 along the Columbia River, likely due to Asian

imports at the nearby Port of Vancouver, he said.

The Asian gypsy moth is more of a danger to agriculture and the environment than the European gypsy moth, whose females are incapable of flight, Burfitt said.

Asian gypsy moth females can fly and produce up to 1,000 eggs each, so the species can become established more rapidly, he said.

With about 600 host plants, the Asian gypsy moth also has more habitat available, he said.

The pest can greatly defoliate wild-growing plants, negatively affecting stream temperatures, Burfitt said.

For agricultural products, such as nursery stock, the pest's establishment would cause increased pesticide use and may impede shipments to other states and countries, he said.

In 2000, the Washington State Department of Agriculture sprayed for the insects on 725 acres in the Ballard and Magnolia neighborhoods of Seattle.

In 1992, WSDA sprayed 116,457 acres for the Asian gypsy moths in Pierce and King counties.

# PERS reform a priority for business leaders

By **TED SICKINGER**  
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Reforms to Oregon's public pension system took a prominent position in the playbook business leaders unveiled at their annual economic confab with legislators.

Organizers of the Oregon Leadership Summit identified soaring pension costs as one of the main headwinds that could stall or derail fiscal and economic progress.

But Democratic leaders who spoke at Monday's summit gave the issue a wide berth. Gov. Kate Brown didn't mention it. Nor did House Speaker Tina Kotek. And Sen. President Peter Courtney gave it an oblique reference as a contributor to the budgetary Civil War that he says could unfold in 2017.

Away from the main convention ballroom, however, the state's looming pension problems took center stage at a sparsely attended breakout session late in the day. A panel of experts dissected their history and their looming impact on government budgets.

They urged lawmakers not to ignore the problem: an \$18 billion-and-growing funding deficit in the Public Employees Retirement System. In order to bail it out, required payments from government employers will go up by 20 percent in each of the next three budget cycles, said Steve Rodeman, PERS executive director.

By 2021, that means

schools, municipalities and government agencies will be dedicating almost one-third of their payroll dollars to the retirement system.

John Tapogna, an economist with ECONorthwest, said legislators had designed an "unusually exotic" and expensive pension system. He called it a generational mistake, and said the state continues to deal with its aftermath.

In May, the Oregon Supreme Court threw out most of the pension reforms enacted by the Legislature in 2013. In the process, it put any reduction in current retiree benefits off limits. That eliminated the reforms lawmakers felt were most equitable, because retiree benefits comprise the bulk of the system's unfunded liability.

Yet panelists on Monday discussed several ways in which the cost increases expected in coming years could be more equitably absorbed or minimized.

Chief among them: requiring public employees to contribute to the pension fund, absorbing some of the expense currently being borne by public employers and taxpayers.

Panelists said Oregon is the only state in the nation that requires no contribution to its public pension system from employees. That has been the case since 2004, when previous pension reforms redirected public employees' 6 percent retirement contributions out of the pension system and into a supplementary retirement account owned by employees.

## BRIEFLY

### 74,500 Oregonians enroll, re-enroll via HealthCare.gov

PORTLAND (AP) — Federal statistics show 74,500 Oregonians have signed up for private health insurance plans via the federal exchange portal.

The data released Wednesday by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid include newly insured Oregonians, as well as those who already had insurance but shopped around and actively re-enrolled via HealthCare.gov.

The figure does not include Oregonians who are insured but decided not to shop for a different plan and will be automatically re-enrolled in their current plan.

Citing heavy last-minute demand, U.S. health officials extended the deadline to sign up for health insurance coverage that would take effect Jan. 1. The new deadline is Thursday at midnight.

The final sign-up deadline is Jan. 31, but for those who sign up after the deadline coverage will start in February.

### SeaTac employers seek hearing on minimum wage

SEATTLE (AP) — While most minimum-wage employees at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport are being paid \$15.24 an hour, employers are looking to contest the raise.

The *Seattle Times* reports that Alaska Airlines and three other plaintiffs on Tuesday asked King County Superior Court to hear new evidence on whether the city of SeaTac's minimum-wage law interferes with airport operations.

The city raised minimum wage for hospitality and transportation workers to \$15 an hour in January 2014. After the proposition was passed, Alaska Airlines, the Washington Restaurant Association, Filo Foods and BF Foods filed a lawsuit challenging the city's power to dictate pay at Sea-Tac Airport, which is owned and operated by the Port of Seattle.

In August, the Washington Supreme Court reversed a lower court's decision and ruled that wages should go up at the airport.

### City apologizes for letters sent to residents after storm

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — Spokane officials are issuing apologies to homeowners who received letters after the Nov. 17 windstorm telling them to clean up the mess or face fines.

KREM-TV reports that the apology letters say that the notices didn't "effectively convey" the city's intent.

Officials say the letters were meant to inform homeowners of resources available to them to help in storm recovery.

A homeowner said she received a notification three days after the storm that told her to clean up the damage. The letter stated if she did not comply, the house may be deemed unsafe and she would have to pay \$1,500.

Officials say dozens of homeowners had received the letters based on what emergency crews saw as they assessed the damage from the storm.

## Corrections

Residents in the Hermiston Fire District pay tax of \$1.20 per \$1,000 of assessed value, and residents in the Stanfield Fire District pay \$2.06 per \$1,000. The *East Oregonian* published inaccurate figures for those rates in a story Wednesday. 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

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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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## AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Snow, 1-3", some ice late	Milder with a shower or two	A thick cloud cover	Cloudy with a bit of rain	Cloudy with a little rain

**PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST**

35°	32°	46°	29°	41°	27°	41°	35°	43°	36°
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**HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST**

34°	30°	46°	29°	42°	28°	42°	35°	45°	35°
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**ALMANAC**

**PENDLETON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday

**TEMPERATURE**

HIGH	LOW
41°	32°
Yesterday	41°
Normals	39°
Records	62° (1942) -12° (1964)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.04"  
Month to date 1.62"  
Normal month to date 0.75"  
Year to date 9.43"  
Last year to date 11.72"  
Normal year to date 12.22"

**HERMISTON**  
through 3 p.m. yesterday

**TEMPERATURE**

HIGH	LOW
44°	36°
Yesterday	44°
Normals	39°
Records	66° (1959) -16° (2008)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace  
Month to date 1.11"  
Normal month to date 0.80"  
Year to date 6.50"  
Last year to date 6.74"  
Normal year to date 9.27"

**SUN AND MOON**

Sunrise today	7:30 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:12 p.m.
Moonrise today	11:35 a.m.
Moonset today	11:25 p.m.

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

**REGIONAL FORECAST**

Coastal Oregon: Rain today; windy. Periods of rain, some heavy tonight. Occasional rain tomorrow.

Eastern and Central Oregon: A wintry mix today, accumulating 1-2 inches across the north and in central parts. Rain south.

Western Washington: Rain today. Rain, heavy at times tonight. A couple of showers tomorrow.

Eastern Washington: Snow, accumulating 3-6 inches toward the Cascades, 1-2 inches in the north and an icy mix south.

Cascades: Cloudy with snow today, accumulating 3-6 inches. Cloudy with snow then rain tonight.

Northern California: Cloudy today with a shower. Periods of rain tonight. Additional rain Friday.

**REGIONAL CITIES**

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	54	45	r	50	40	sh
Baker City	31	31	sn	41	29	c
Bend	46	39	r	42	22	r
Brookings	54	47	r	50	38	r
Burns	36	31	sf	39	24	r
Enterprise	32	30	i	41	27	c
Eugene	54	46	r	50	36	sh
Heppner	37	33	i	46	29	r
Hermiston	34	30	i	46	29	sh
John Day	42	39	sn	45	31	c
Klamath Falls	40	33	r	41	26	r
La Grande	35	32	sn	44	28	r
Meacham	34	31	sn	40	26	r
Medford	52	43	r	48	34	r
Newport	54	45	r	50	40	sh
North Bend	58	48	r	52	40	r
Ontario	35	33	sn	43	36	r
Pasco	34	30	i	44	28	sh
Pendleton	35	32	sn	46	29	sh
Portland	50	44	r	49	38	sh
Redmond	48	41	r	45	27	r
Salem	55	45	r	50	37	sh
Spokane	32	29	sn	40	25	i
Ukiah	39	36	i	43	27	r
Vancouver	50	44	r	48	37	sh
Walla Walla	36	33	i	46	33	sh
Yakima	35	29	sn	42	22	sn

**WORLD CITIES**

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	38	16	s	42	16	s
Hong Kong	60	51	s	62	55	s
Jerusalem	52	43	pc	53	40	c
London	59	52	pc	57	54	pc
Mexico City	77	45	pc	67	41	pc
Moscow	24	17	pc	28	26	c
Paris	58	48	pc	54	47	pc
Rome	59	38	s	59	40	pc
Seoul	31	21	s	39	24	pc
Sydney	79	68	pc	83	69	s
Tokyo	52	42	c	50	39	pc

**WINDS**

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	NNE 4-8	WSW 4-8
Pendleton	SSE 4-8	WSW 6-12

**UV INDEX TODAY**

0 0 0 0 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:** Rain will drench much of the East today as colder air expands over the Midwest. Snow showers will develop over the western Great Lakes and the central Plains. Snow, ice and rain will expand in the Northwest.

**Yesterday's National Extremes:** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 86° in Plant City, Fla. Low -14° in Grand Canyon, Ariz.

**NATIONAL CITIES**

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	36	18	s	45	23	s
Atlanta	65	38	t	52	33	s
Atlanta City	60	49	r	51	34	r
Baltimore	55	41	r	49	29	pc
Billings	23	15	pc	38	33	c
Birmingham	61	35	s	53	30	s
Boise	36	33	sn	42	37	r
Boston	51	44	r	53	34	r
Charleston, SC	78	61	t	65	35	pc
Charleston, WV	53	31	r	40	27	sf
Chicago	36	23	pc	31	19	pc
Cleveland	44	28	r	36	24	sf
Dallas	60	33	s	56	38	s
Denver	22	9	sf	50	31	pc
Detroit	40	28	c	36	25	sf
El Paso	52	25	s	56	30	s
Fairbanks	2	-11	sn	-1	-3	pc
Fargo	21	4	sf	13	3	pc
Honolulu	83	71	pc	83	72	sh
Houston	62	38	s	59	35	s
Indianapolis	37	26	pc	34	22	pc
Jacksonville	83	64	t	65	36	pc
Kansas City	37	23	pc	41	24	s
Las Vegas	51	36	s	55	37	s
Little Rock	54	32	s	51	32	s
Los Angeles	68	47	s	73	50	s
Louis						