

# Gas explosion rocks Portland

Eight people injured

PORTLAND (AP) — A powerful natural gas explosion rocked a busy Portland, Oregon, shopping district Wednesday, injuring eight people and igniting a fire that sent a huge plume of smoke over the heart of the city.

Three firefighters, two police officers and three civilians were hurt, and one of the firefighters was still in surgery late Wednesday for a broken leg, fire Chief Mike Myers said at a news conference. None of the injuries appeared to be life-threatening.

A building that housed a bagel shop and a beauty salon in the popular NW 23rd Street shopping district was reduced to rubble, and its smoldering roof was played across the road.

The windows of a nearby building were blown out and debris was everywhere. Firefighters swarmed the scene and dumped water from ladder trucks onto the smoking wreckage.

NW Natural released a timeline saying the explosion



AP Photo/Don Ryan  
**Firefighters battle a blaze after a gas explosion in Portland Wednesday. A powerful natural gas explosion that neighbors said felt like an earthquake rocked the busy shopping district and started a fire that sent a huge plume of smoke over the heart of the city.**

occurred at 9:38 a.m. — a time when many businesses were still closed.

City officials said a catastrophe was averted by speedy work from firefighters and police who responded to a reported gas leak and cleared the area of people before the blast.

“There are a lot of people alive” who might not be “but for the excellent work by our first responders,” Mayor Charlie Hales said.

One young fire lieutenant in particular — the same one with the badly broken leg — made several critical decisions that likely saved lives, Myers said.

Fire Lt. Peter St. John positioned fire trucks and hoses in such a way that they were out of the blast zone and ran into the building to pull fire alarms when firefighters realized not everyone had evacuated as ordered, Myers said, adding that the man was new to the fire department.

“That man saved the lives of a lot of people today and a lot of firefighters,” the chief said.

Firefighters also donned their air packs and masks before the blast, an unusual move for a routine gas leak call, but one that also prevented serious facial injuries, he said.

Portland’s NW 23rd Street — nicknamed “Trendy Third” — is packed with boutiques, bars and restaurants. Many are on street level with pricey apartments on the upper levels and a day care facility in the vicinity.

The utility said it got a call at 8:55 a.m. saying a construction crew had hit a gas line. Authorities and utility workers responded in 15 minutes and evacuated the building, NW Natural said in its statement.

People in the neighborhood reported smelling gas as they were evacuated and later felt the explosion.

The utility hasn’t determined what caused the gas to ignite, but NW Natural CEO David Anderson said it was a rare event that required a certain amount of ambient gas, an enclosed space and an ignition source.

## BRIEFLY

### PERS attorneys earned \$1,627 in fees in public records spat

SALEM (AP) — Attorneys representing the state’s Public Employees Retirement System racked up \$1,627 in fees in a dispute with a Salem *Statesman-Journal* reporter who asked the agency to waive a public records request fee.

The *Bend Bulletin* reported Wednesday that attorneys racked up the fees over a \$112 charge. The Oregon Department of Justice overturned the rule last month that allowed PERS to charge for those records.

The move reversed a 2002 interpretation of the law by an earlier state attorney general. Lottery employees this summer told *The Bulletin* they couldn’t waive a \$260 fee for a chain of emails.

After the ruling, the lottery waived the fee and released the records.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum is heading a task force to improve the state’s public records law.

### Cannon Beach looks to become more handicap accessible

CANNON BEACH (AP) — Groups in Cannon Beach are working to bring sand-friendly wheelchairs to the beach.

The *Daily Astorian* reports that the Chamber of Commerce and partners Remax Coastal Advantage, Martin Hospitality and Escape Lodging hope to provide the beach-accessible wheelchairs for visitors to the city next year. Last week, the City Council approved an agreement to store the wheelchairs at City Hall.

The chamber seeks to purchase one adult chair and one youth chair that would be free for public use. The non-motorized chairs start at about \$2,500 and include 4- to 5-inch-wide tires that keep the chair above sand.

Neighboring cities Seaside and Manzanita currently provide beach-accessible wheelchairs for visitors.

### Biologists: Dead deer found in Myrtle Point had lethal virus

MYRTLE POINT (AP) — Biologists with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife say a black-tailed deer found dead in Myrtle Point was infected with a virus that is lethal to the species.

The *Coos Bay World* reported Wednesday that the virus is known as A-H-D and is spread by direct contact. This is the first confirmed case in Coos County. About 400 deer died of the virus near Sisters in 2002.

Symptoms include frothing at the mouth, diarrhea and weakness.

Animals that have been infected usually die in two to five days.

There are no known instances of transmission to humans, but biologists are still urging hunters to wear gloves when dressing deer and to cook the meat thoroughly.

# Ryan Bundy urges jurors to ‘stand for freedom’

PORTLAND (AP) — National wildlife refuge occupier Ryan Bundy twice referenced the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during his closing argument Wednesday, and he told jurors to “stand for freedom” and find him not guilty.

Bundy, 43, is among seven defendants being tried on a charge of conspiring to impede federal workers from doing their jobs during last winter’s occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon. Jurors are expected to begin deliberations Thursday, capping a six-week trial.

Acting as his own attorney, Bundy quoted the civil rights leader at the beginning and toward the end of his hourlong argument, saying injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Bundy said that explains why he joined the protest in support of two ranchers he believes were wrongly imprisoned. He said federal

government overreach not only put ranchers Dwight and Steven Hammond behind bars, it imperils the economies of places such as Harney County, where the Hammond ranch and the refuge are located.

He said the county — nearly 10 times the size of Rhode Island — has gone from a jewel to “the biggest weed patch in the country,” and it’s because the federal government controls most of the land and restricts logging and ranching.

Because there is no doubt the occupation occurred, Bundy repeatedly appealed to the jurors’ sense of justice, essentially saying a minor infraction is justified for the greater good.

“At some point the people have to insist that the government is not our master,” he said. “They are our servants, and we have given them a duty.”

The refuge takeover began during a Jan. 2 rally in support of the Hammonds and lasted nearly six weeks.

Bundy and other key figures, including his younger

brother, Ammon, were arrested during a Jan. 26 traffic stop that ended with Oregon State Police fatally shooting occupation spokesman Robert “LaVoy” Finicum.

The government gave its closing statement Tuesday, with federal prosecutor Ethan Knight asserting it is “inherently intimidating” to have your workplace taken over by an armed group that doesn’t like you.

Ryan Bundy did not deny taking over workspaces that belonged to U.S. Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Bureau of Land Management employees. But, as the defendants have repeatedly said, there was no conspiracy to prevent them from going to work.

“We didn’t know their names, their tasks. We didn’t know whose seat we were sitting in, and we didn’t care,” Bundy said.

That may sound callous, Bundy told jurors, but “our purpose was so beyond such considerations.”

One of Bundy’s co-defendants, Shawna Cox, also represented herself during the trial. On Wednesday, she let her standby counsel, Tiffany Harris, handle her closing statement.

Harris hit on similar points as Bundy, talking about the economic travails of Harney County. She said the government wants to sell a story that outsiders came to Burns and stirred up trouble.

“The problem was already there,” Harris said.

The conspiracy charge faced by the seven defendants is punishable by up to six years in prison. Harris emphasized to jurors that the government picks and chooses who to prosecute and how serious a charge to file.

Hinting at the possibility of a Donald Trump presidency, she said “administrations change” and there may come a time when urban liberals feel the need to take a hard stand, and not simply go home after a rally.

## 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

To subscribe, call 1-800-522-0255  
or go online to www.eastoregonian.com  
and click on 'Subscribe'

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.  
Copyright © 2016, EO Media Group

Subscriber services:  
For home delivery, vacation stops or delivery concerns: 1-800-522-0255

Didn't receive your paper? Call 1-800-522-0255  
before noon Tuesday through Friday  
or before 10 a.m. Saturday  
for same-day redelivery

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	Local home delivery	Savings off cover price
EZPay	\$14.50	41 percent
52 weeks	\$173.67	41 percent
26 weeks	\$91.86	38 percent
13 weeks	\$47.77	36 percent

\*EZ Pay = one-year rate with a monthly credit or debit card/check charge

### Single copy price:

\$1 Tuesday through Friday, \$1.50 Saturday

Advertising Director: Marissa Williams

541-278-2669 • addirector@eastoregonian.com

Advertising Services: Laura Jensen

541-966-0806 • ljensen@eastoregonian.com

Multimedia Consultants:

• Terri Briggs

541-278-2678 • tbriggs@eastoregonian.com

• Amanda Jacobs

541-278-2683 • ajacobs@eastoregonian.com

• Jeanne Jewett

541-564-4531 • jjewett@eastoregonian.com

• Chris McClellan

541-966-0827 • cmcclellan@eastoregonian.com

• Stephanie Newsom

541-278-2687 • snewsom@eastoregonian.com

• Dayle Stinson

541-278-2670 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

• Audra Workman

541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com

Classified & Legal Advertising

1-800-962-2819 or 541-278-2878

classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legal@eastoregonian.com

NEWS

• To submit news tips and press releases: call 541-966-0818 •

fax 541-276-8314 • email news@eastoregonian.com

• To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News:

email community@eastoregonian.com or call Tammy Malgesini at

541-564-4539 or Renee Struthers in at 541-966-0818.

• To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries:

email rstruthers@eastoregonian.com or visit www.eastoregonian.com

community/announcements

• 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.

• To submit sports or outdoors information or tips:

541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Production Manager: Mike Jensen

541-215-0824 • mjensen@eastoregonian.com

## AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with showers	A couple of showers	Intervals of clouds and sunshine	A thick cloud cover	Variably cloudy, showers around

### PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

64°	50°	58°	44°	63°	46°	61°	44°	62°	44°
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

### HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

69°	49°	60°	44°	65°	44°	64°	43°	65°	47°
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

### ALMANAC

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

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	65°	39°
Normals	62°	39°
Records	82° (1940)	15° (1911)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 1.22"  
Normal month to date 0.62"  
Year to date 9.29"  
Last year to date 5.89"  
Normal year to date 9.60"

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

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	66°	35°
Normals	64°	38°
Records	77° (1973)	15° (1949)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.90"  
Normal month to date 0.35"  
Year to date 6.34"  
Last year to date 3.71"  
Normal year to date 6.94"

### SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	7:19 a.m.
Sunset tonight	6:00 p.m.
Moonrise today	10:08 p.m.
Moonset today	12:25 p.m.

Last

Oct 22

New

Oct 30

First

Nov 7

Full

Nov 14

### REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	62	48	r	60	48	r
Baker City	54	34	c	61	32	pc
Bend	63	45	sh	59	36	pc
Brookings	62	53	pc	59	49	pc
Burns	61	30	pc	63	32	pc
Enterprise	54	41	sh	59	39	sh
Eugene	62	50	r	62	46	pc
Heppner	63	48	sh	59	41	pc
Hermiston	69	49	sh	60	44	sh
John Day	61	49	c	64	42	pc
Klamath Falls	65	35	pc	61	33	pc
La Grande	55	44	sh	62	40	sh
Meacham	63	44	sh	59	40	sh
Medford	69	50	pc	65	45	r
Newport	60	50	r	57	49	sh
North Bend	63	53	r	62	50	pc
Ontario	63	36	pc	66	40	pc
Pasco	64	45	sh	59	41	pc
Pendleton	64	50	sh	58	44	sh
Portland	63	50	r	61	49	sh
Redmond	66	42	sh	59	34	pc
Salem	62	49	r	60	48	pc
Spokane	52	42	r	54	40	c
Ukiah	58	46	sh	60	38	sh
Vancouver	62	49	r	60	49	sh
Walla Walla	61	49	sh	57	46	sh
Yakima	63	39	c	61	37	pc

### WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	57	50	r	54	49	sh
Hong Kong	87	78	pc	83	79	r
Jerusalem	75	59	s	74	60	pc
London	58	44	pc	56	43	pc
Mexico City	75	54	pc	68	52	t
Moscow	37	31	c	37	29	c
Paris	58	45	sh	57	40	pc
Rome	69	56	pc	68	51	sh
Seoul	78	56	pc	72	55	c
Sydney	73	62	sh	80	63	pc
Tokyo	78	59	pc	67	60	pc

### WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	SW 6-12	WSW 4-8
Pendleton	SSW 7-14	NW 4-8

### UV INDEX TODAY

0	1	2	2	1	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.

Forecasts and graphics provided by  
**AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2016

### NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

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

**National Summary:** A large storm system will spread rain and storms from the Northeast through the Ohio Valley to the lower Mississippi Valley today. Another storm will spread rain across the Pacific Northwest.

**Yesterday's National Extremes:** (for the 48 contiguous states)  
**High 100°** in McAllen, Texas      **Low 11°** in Bodie State Park, Calif.

### NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.			Today			Fri.			
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W	
Albuquerque	69	43	s	72	47	s	Louisville	71	49	r	63	43	pc
Atlanta	88	58	pc	70	47	c	Memphis	73	49	sh	67	45	s
Baltimore	73	64	pc	73	49	sh	Miami	85	70	pc	87	70	pc
Birmingham	78	61	pc	67	45	sh	Millwaukee	56	39	pc	53	39	pc
Billings	60	45	pc	65	43	pc	Minneapolis	52	36	pc	56	41	pc
Boston	87	53	pc	71	45	pc	Nashville	78	49	t	65	41	pc
Boise	64	44	pc	69	44	pc	New Orleans	89	64	pc	79		