

Legal marijuana is producing jobs, revenue

SALEM (AP) — The states that have legalized recreational marijuana — a multi-billion-dollar business — don't want to hear the federal government talk about a crackdown. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown says she wants Oregonians left alone to "grow these jobs."

In Oregon alone, that's roughly 12,500 jobs, said economist Beau Whitney of Portland, adding that he is making a conservative estimate. Oregon's attorney general said she would be duty-bound to fight to protect the state's marijuana industry.

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has said his department is reviewing a Justice Department memo that gives states flexibility in passing marijuana laws and noted "it does remain a violation of federal law to distribute marijuana throughout any place in the United States, whether a state legalizes it or not." White House spokesman Sean Spicer predicted stepped up enforcement.

Underlining how the marijuana industry is pushing job growth in Oregon, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, which regulates and licenses the state's recreational marijuana industry, says it has over 12,640 appli-



AP Photo/Andrew Selsky, file

In this Sept. 2016 file photo, different strains of marijuana are displayed in West Salem Cannabis, a marijuana shop in Salem. In Oregon, at least 12,500 jobs are attributed to legal recreational marijuana and in Oregon, Washington state and Colorado, marijuana tax revenues totaled \$335 million in 2016.

cations for marijuana worker permits. It has also received 2,174 marijuana license applications, with over half coming from would-be producers and the rest mostly from those seeking to set up as retailers, processors, wholesalers and laboratories. It had activated 943 licenses by Tuesday.

Marijuana shops are prevalent in many Oregon cities. In the countryside, marijuana greenhouses are not uncommon.

"We now have a nascent, somewhat successful industry," Brown said in an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press and a freelance journalist. "These are good paying jobs. It's a pretty diverse business community."

In January alone, recreational marijuana sales in Oregon were over \$20 million, with medical marijuana generating about \$2.8 million more, the OLCC said.

In Oregon, Washington state and Colorado, marijuana

tax revenues totaled at least \$335 million in either the last calendar year or the last fiscal year.

Whitney, who has been involved in several marijuana businesses and has advised state government, estimates that workers in the marijuana industry in Oregon earn a total of \$315 million per year. That's based on workers earning an average of \$12 per hour. He noted that the wage scales vary widely, with harvesters earning less than processors and chemists. Their wages are pumped back into the local economies.

If the Trump administration moves against legalized recreational marijuana, it would be going against its own objectives, Oregon's governor said.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum indicated she would go to court to protect those jobs. Currently, the Cole Memorandum, which provides guidance for federal marijuana enforcement, restricts it to a few areas, including preventing distribution to minors and preventing marijuana from being transported from pot-legal states to other states. Under the Cole Memorandum, states where marijuana is legal have been largely left alone.

BRIEFLY

Efforts expand to stop uranium from entering Columbia River

RICHLAND, Wash. (AP) — Efforts to prevent uranium from leaching into the Columbia River along the Hanford Nuclear Reservation are being expanded after a test showed good results.

Wells are being drilled to inject a solution into the ground to bind the uranium to the soil and prevent it from migrating into the groundwater and then into the river.

The *Tri-City Herald* says much of the soil contaminated with uranium at the Hanford 300 Area has been dug up down to 15 feet, removing the majority of the contamination.

The uranium is left over from decades of work making plutonium for nuclear weapons during World War II and the Cold War. As a byproduct of the process, 60 tons of dissolved uranium was dumped into the ground.

sectors such as government and health care.

Statewide employment growth over the last 12 months totaled 43,200 new jobs.

Gray wolf blamed for death of calf

MEDFORD (AP) — State wildlife officials say a gray wolf has spent the last several months in Jackson County, where it attacked and killed a 3-day-old calf on a private ranch.

The *Mail Tribune* reports the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife says the GPS collar on OR-25 showed it was at the ranch in Prospect on Saturday around the time a person working on the property found the dead calf.

Wildlife biologists say the 3-year-old male wolf known to frequent Klamath County has remained almost exclusively in Jackson County for the past two months.

They suspect OR-25 is trying to lure away a female wolf from the Rogue Pack.

Records show Saturday's attack was the second time OR-25 has been involved in livestock predation.

Oregon boasts lowest jobless rate in 40 years

SALEM — Oregon's jobless rate dropped to 4.3 percent in January, marking the lowest such figure since the state began tracking employment data in 1976.

State officials say it's also lower than the nationwide rate of 4.8 percent.

The last time Oregon's jobless rate dipped below 5 percent was during the dot-com boom in the mid-1990s.

Oregon businesses added 2,600 nonfarm employees to their payrolls in January, which was a quarter-percent drop from the recent monthly averages.

The construction industry added the most jobs for the month, while the biggest cuts occurred in

Salem sets rainfall record for Feb.

SALEM (AP) — The city of Salem has set a record for rainfall in February, with 13.29 inches of precipitation.

The *Statesman Journal* reports Wednesday that that number blew past the record of 13.01 inches of rain set in 1996. It's way above the normal total of 4.56 inches.

It was the second month this season that Salem set a record. October's 11.25 inches was also the most rain during that month in recorded history. Recorded totals go back to 1892.

Salem residents hoping for some dry weather are out of luck. The forecast calls for wet weather for the next eight to 14 days.

Lawmakers back away from farm property tax bill

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Intense opposition by Oregon's farmers, ranchers and forestland owners has apparently convinced lawmakers to back away from altering key property tax provisions affecting agriculture and forestry.

Machinery used for agriculture and forestry is exempt from property tax assessments while property dedicated to producing crops, livestock and timber is less heavily taxed than other real estate.

Under the original language of House Bill 2859, the property tax exemption for equipment and the farm use assessment for land would expire in 2024 unless renewed by lawmakers.

The proposal evoked alarm in Oregon's natural resource community, which turned

out in full force at a March 1 hearing to argue that creating a "sunset" for these provisions would financially destabilize farming, ranching and forestry.

By the end of the hearing, the overwhelmingly negative testimony against HB 2859 seemed to have the desired effect on members of the House Revenue Committee.

"I'm pretty convinced putting a sunset on these things that are very long-term assets doesn't make any sense," said Rep. Phil Barnhart, D-Eugene, the committee's chair.

At the beginning of the hearing, Barnhart said the bill was drafted in response to an audit from Oregon's Secretary of State's Office, which called for periodic review of existing property tax exemptions and tax credits.

In light of the objections to HB 2859, though, Barnhart said he thought the sunset

provisions related to natural resources should be eliminated from the bill.

The suggestion drew no objections from other committee members, so Barnhart said they would only consider the remaining provisions of HB 2859 related to economic development and other issues.

"I think you should consider all of what I just said means that you win," Barnhart told the audience, to enthusiastic applause.

Farmers, ranchers and forestland owners at the hearing emphasized that natural resource industries were already highly uncertain due to the weather and volatile markets.

Landowners said they shouldn't also have to contend with the possibility their property taxes may rise dramatically every six years,

which is the period of sunset review established under HB 2859.

Marsha Carr, a forestland owner near Monroe, Ore., said her annual property taxes would rise from about \$1,000 to more than \$25,000 under HB 2859.

Carr said her family harvests timber in small patches of five to seven acres, which preserves habitat for wildlife and songbirds.

"That would have to change to pay the taxes," she said. "We would have to cut larger areas."

Farmers rely on specialized equipment but they often operate it for only a month or less per year, unlike other industries where machinery creates revenues year-round, said Roger Beyer, a lobbyist for the Western Equipment Dealers Association and several crop organizations.

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 © 2017, 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

EZPay	Local home delivery	Savings off cover price
52 weeks	\$14.50	41 percent
26 weeks	\$173.67	41 percent
13 weeks	\$91.86	38 percent
	\$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 • adirector@eastoregonian.com

Advertising Services: Laura Jensen
541-966-0806 • ljensen@eastoregonian.com

Multimedia Consultants:

• Terri Briggs
541-278-2678 • tbriggs@eastoregonian.com

• Danni Halladay
541-278-2683 • dhalladay@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 541-278-2678

classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legal@eastoregonian.com

NEWS

• To submit news tips and press releases: • call 541-966-0818 • fax 541-278-8314 • 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 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 and chilly	An afternoon shower	Mainly cloudy with a bit of rain	Mostly cloudy with a bit of snow	Cloudy and chilly with a shower
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
45° 33°	50° 33°	45° 32°	45° 29°	47° 36°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
48° 34°	50° 32°	47° 35°	47° 31°	51° 36°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE HIGH LOW

Yesterday 50° 32°

Normals 51° 32°

Records 74° (1925) 1° (1993)

PRECIPITATION 24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date 0.00"

Normal month to date 0.03"

Year to date 3.92"

Last year to date 2.61"

Normal year to date 2.54"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE HIGH LOW

Yesterday 56° 37°

Normals 53° 31°

Records 69° (1959) 10° (1993)

PRECIPITATION 24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date 0.00"

Normal month to date 0.04"

Year to date 3.46"

Last year to date 1.60"

Normal year to date 2.28"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 6:32 a.m.

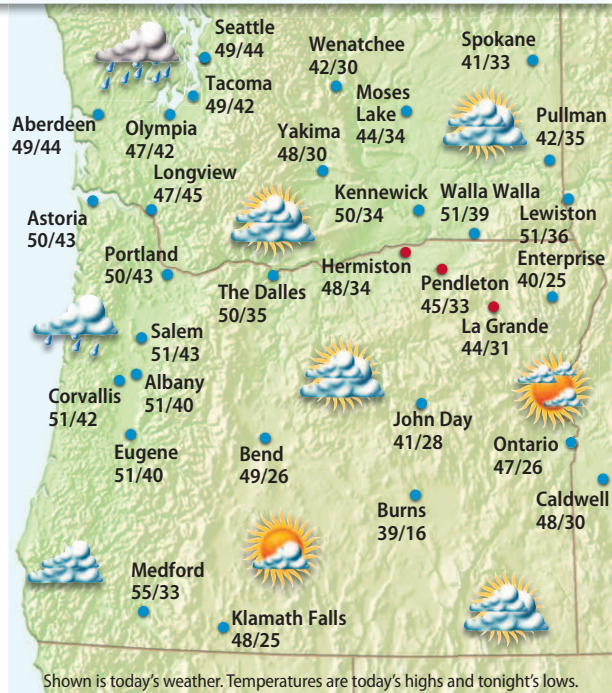
Sunset tonight 5:43 p.m.

Moonrise today 8:56 a.m.

Moonset today 10:48 p.m.

First Full Last New

Mar 5 Mar 12 Mar 20 Mar 27



REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Cloudy today, occasional rain and drizzle across the north.

Eastern Washington: Mostly cloudy today.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Mainly cloudy and cold today. Mostly cloudy tonight; a shower in spots across the north.

Western Washington: Occasional rain and drizzle today; however, a couple of showers across the south.

Cascades: Mostly cloudy today; a bit of morning snow, then a little rain across the north.

Northern California: Partly sunny today. Mainly clear tonight. Intervals of clouds and sun tomorrow.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	50	43	r	50	36	r
Baker City	42	26	c	43	32	c
Bend	49	26	c	49	33	c
Brookings	50	39	c	50	43	sh
Burns	39	16	c	44	24	c
Enterprise	40	25	c	39	31	c
Eugene	51	40	c	53	40	r
Heppner	43	29	c	45	31	c
Hermiston	48	34	c	50	32	c
John Day	41	28	c	43	35	c
Klamath Falls	48	25	pc	48	33	c
La Grande	44	31	c	44	35	c
Meacham	41	28	c	45	33	c
Medford	55	33	c	54	40	r
Newport	48	45	sh	50	40	r
North Bend	52	44	c	53	43	r
Ontario	47	26	pc	49	34	c
Pasco	51	35	c	56	36	c
Pendleton	45	33	c	50	33	c
Portland	50	43	sh	51	37	c
Redmond	52	28	c	52	31	c
Salem	51	43	sh	51	39	r
Spokane	41	33	c	45	32	r
Ukiah	41	29	c	44	32	c
Vancouver	50	41	sh	51	38	r
Walla Walla	51	39	c	52	38	c
Yakima	48	30	c	53	28	c

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	58	31	s	58	28	s
Hong Kong	73	60	s	69	63	s
Jerusalem	56	46	pc	54	44	pc
London	50	42	c	51	44	r
Mexico City	76	48	pc	71	48	pc
Moscow	39	32	sh	38	31	sn
Paris	54	41	pc	61	44	pc
Rome	60	45	pc	62	48	sh
Seoul	43	25	s	49	31	s
Sydney	78	68	t	78	68	t
Tokyo	50	44	r	56	42	s

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	WSW 4-8	SSW 3-6
Pendleton	SW 3-6	S 6-12

UV INDEX TODAY

0 2 2 2 0 0

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

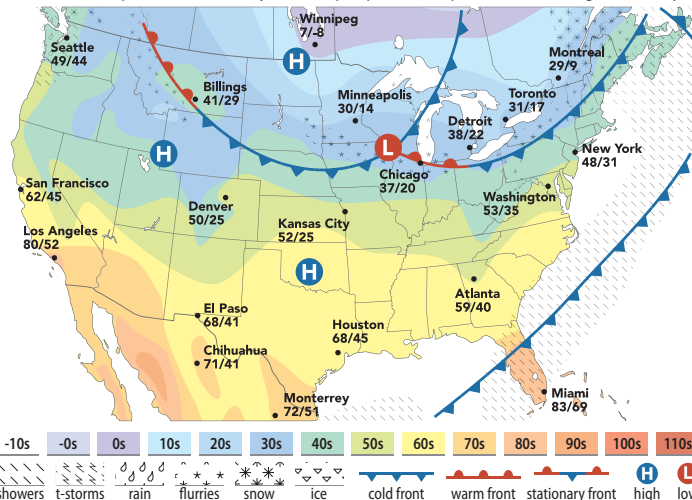
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

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

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2017

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

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



Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 89° in Zapata, Texas Low -13° in Farson, Wyo.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	57	31	s	61	37	s
Atlanta	59	40	s	58	33	s
Atlanta City	50	31	pc	43	22	sh
Baltimore	51	29	pc	44	21	sn
Billing	41	29				