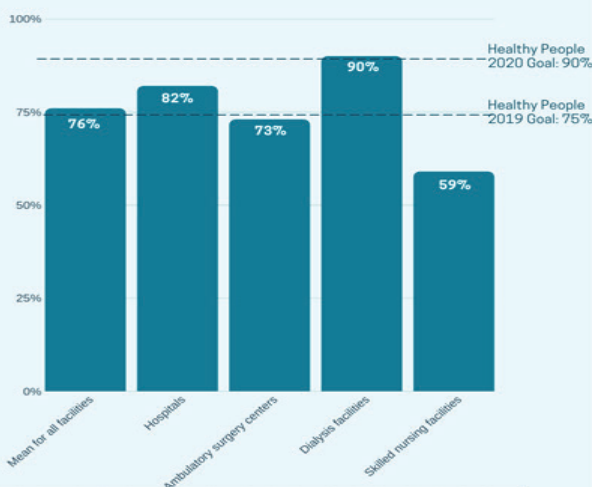


Flu vaccination rates among health care workers are still falling short

A new state report shows that although health care worker flu vaccination rates have increased over seven flu seasons, facilities continue to fall short of national goals overall.



Oregon Health Authority

Flu vaccination rates falls short

Dialysis facility workers continue to have highest flu immunization rates, report says

East Oregonian

PORTLAND — A new state report shows that although health care worker influenza vaccination rates have increased over seven flu seasons, facilities overall continue to fall short of national goals.

Health care worker flu vaccination rates increased by 46% since the 2011-12 flu season — from 52% for all health care facility types to 76% during the 2017-18 season. That means the state beat the national Healthy

People 2015 goal of a 75% health care worker flu vaccination rate, but remains well below the Healthy People 2020 goal of 90%, according to the Oregon Health Care Worker Influenza Vaccination Annual Report.

The report was published this week by the Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention Section at the Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division.

“When you need to be in the hospital for a medical or surgical problem, the last thing you want is to catch the flu from your doctor or nurse,” said Dat Tran, public health physician in the Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention Section. “When health care workers are vaccinated against the flu, the people they’re car-

ing for are protected.”

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services developed the Healthy People program with 10-year objectives for improving the health of all Americans.

Dialysis facility workers in Oregon have the highest flu vaccination rates of health care facility types covered by the report, topping both the 2015 and 2020 Healthy People goals. Their rate of 90% during the 2017-18 flu season represents a 5.8% increase from the 2016-17 rate of 85%.

Hospitals overall also beat the national 2015 goal for health care worker immunizations against the flu, coming in at a rate of 82% during the 2017-18 season, but still short of the 2020 goal. Since the 2011-12

season, rates of flu immunizations among health care workers at hospitals have risen by 37%.

Ambulatory surgery centers and skilled nursing facilities had the lowest rates of flu vaccinations among health care workers, coming in below both the 2015 and 2020 national goals. Ambulatory surgery centers saw only a slight rise between the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, from 72% to 73%. The rate of increase at skilled nursing facilities was similarly sluggish: 57% to 59%.

Tran said publication of the report each year tracks progress toward the Healthy People 2020 goal and directs public health action, showing the need for additional support and education.

BRIEFLY

Triple-fatal DUI crash means 19 years in prison for man

SALEM (AP) — A 32-year-old man has been sentenced to 19 years in prison for causing the death of his girlfriend and two of his co-workers while driving drunk near Gates.

The *Statesman Journal* reports that David Trimble, of Lebanon, previously pleaded guilty to three counts of first-degree manslaughter and DUI. He was sentenced Wednesday.

According to police records, his blood-alcohol content was 0.27 percent — more than three times the legal limit— following the Oct. 1 crash.

Prosecutor Melodie Dickey argued for a prison sentence of 25 years with a lifetime driver’s license revocation.

Although Trimble could’ve faced more than 30 years in prison, the state agreed to cap its sentencing recommendation to 25 years in exchange for his guilty plea.

University fraternity suspended until June 2021 for hazing

EUGENE (AP) — The University of Oregon chapter of the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity has been suspended for the next two years following a university investigation of hazing.

The *Register-Guard* reported Wednesday the local chapter of Epsilon Omega lost its recognition by the university and all privileges associated with it until June 2021.

The chapter was placed on temporary suspension in April.

The fraternity’s national headquarters has since served a cease-and-desist order to the chapter.

The University of Oregon Fraternity and Sorority Life conduct website shows it’s the fourth fraternity at the university currently placed on suspension or probation for hazing. Phi Kappa Psi is on suspension until fall 2020. Sigma Alpha Epsilon and Sigma Chi are both on disciplinary probation until June 2020.

The website lists Alpha Epsilon Pi

as suspended for hazing, prohibited alcohol, prohibited drugs and failure to comply.

Man gets 27 years for trying to kill Salem homeless men

SALEM (AP) — A Portland man has been sentenced to 26 years and eight months in prison for a series of attacks during which he tried to kill a man with a baseball bat and stabbed another man and forced him to walk into the river.

Joseph Michael Sizemore, 33, pleaded guilty to attempted murder, first-degree robbery, first-degree assault, second-degree assault and coercion. He was sentenced Tuesday.

He and Brady Canaga, 23, of Turner, were arrested in March after their third alleged victim was hospitalized with a punctured lung and deep laceration to his knee.

Canaga remains in Marion County jail on similar charges. He is scheduled to plead and be sentenced on July 17.

Vale railroad opposes Nyssa shipping center project

Oregon Eastern Railroad says jobs at risk and county ignored its offers

By PAT CALDWELL AND KRISTINE DE LEON
Malheur Enterprise

VALE — A Vale-based railroad is opposing plans for a new Nyssa shipping center, saying Malheur County officials “ignored” its approaches on how to do the project at less cost.

Oregon Eastern Railroad said in a letter to the Oregon Transportation Commission that “we would encourage the OTC to not proceed with this project as proposed.”

The commission was scheduled to consider Thursday whether to approve Malheur County’s plan for the Treasure Valley Reload Center and release \$26 million in state funding. The shipping center has been proposed to support the area’s onion industry.

Oregon Eastern, part of The Western Group of short line railroads, said in its June 12 letter to the commission that it “has more flexible criteria for new rail connections which would reduce track construction costs, engineering approval process, and time to construction.”

The letter was disclosed Tuesday by the state Transportation Department as part of a packet of material for commissioners on the Nyssa project.

Bruce Carswell, railroad senior vice president, told the commission that taxpayer money set to be spent on the Nyssa project is “a large public capital expenditure without a justified business need for that particular location and doesn’t take advantage of existing rail infrastructure.”

Carswell also took issue with the manner used to choose the proposed Nyssa center.

“The property and site selection process were not transparent and appeared to favor predetermined outcomes,” wrote Carswell.

He said the railroad “is very supportive of economic development for this region and we agree with the merits and concept of the project,” he said.

Oregon Eastern runs a 23-mile route between Ontario and the EP Minerals plant west of Vale.

The railroad said it repeatedly contacted Malheur County economic development officials to be involved in the transload project.

“We were completely ignored,” Carswell wrote.

Greg Smith, Malheur County’s economic development director, didn’t respond to a voice message seeking comment. His project manager in Ontario, John Braese, said Tuesday that he was unaware of railroad’s letter.

“This is the first I’ve heard anything of it,” said Braese.

The Nyssa project is being managed by the Malheur County Development Corp., a public company set up by the county and none of its seven directors responded to questions regarding Carswell’s claims. Instead, some of them passed on the questions to Smith. The directors are Grant Kitamura, Jeremy Leathers, John Qualls, Kay Riley, Lynn Findley, Toni Parish and Corey Maag.

Carswell said the railroad submitted the letter out of frustration over its dealings with county economic development officials.

Oregon Eastern contacted Smith in July 2017 with concerns.

Carswell wrote that his firm “attempted several times to point out multiple possible properties connecting to OERR but was completely ignored by Malheur County EDC (economic development corporation).”

He also said “we did have some discussion with ODOT folks.”

“We had multiple dialogues with stakeholders. We voiced our concerns and opinions, but we don’t feel that they were properly considered,” said Carswell.



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