

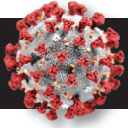
EAST OREGONIAN

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CORONAVIRUS | MOST NEW CASES IN SINGLE DAY BRINGS STATE TALLY TO 114, A7

STATE SHUTDOWN

Options available for parents

Free resources available for parents trying to homeschool

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The six-week school closure announced by Gov. Kate Brown last week has suddenly given some parents a lot more time with their children than they were expecting.

For some, it might be a time for relaxation or chores, but others are looking for ways to continue their child's education at home.

Kari Goodheart, of Hermiston, said she is currently working on picking out a curriculum for her 12-year-old twin boys to study for the foreseeable future. There are a lot of homeschooling options out there, she said, from secular private schools to public online charter schools to Christian-based homeschooling.

She said she is excited to turn her home into a learning environment, and to be a part of her children's learning experience. She thinks the experience will allow her sons, who often get bored at school, to work at an accelerated pace, but said she thinks once school is back open they will choose to return for social reasons.

"I will let them decide, but I have a feeling they will want to see their friends again," she said.

Amber Street, of Hermiston, who has homeschooled in the past but hadn't been doing so this year, suggested that parents forcing children to sit at a desk all day going through a structured curriculum might not be the way for stressed-out parents to go right now.

"I made a list with my son of what he wants to learn about, and of course, there are dinosaurs, but there are also things like the country of Israel," she said. "That's what we're going to be working on, and theoretically he'll be more cooperative."

She said there are ways to incorporate learning naturally throughout the day — learning measuring and cooking skills while helping in the kitchen, for example, or learning through reading and games. And even if parents are holding

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Different approaches

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Umatilla County show varied responses to COVID-19

By ANTONIO SIERRA AND ALEX CASTLE
East Oregonian



The Oregonian Photo via AP/Beth Nakamura

OREGON

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown declared a state of emergency on March 8, nearly a week after the CTUIR and 10 days before Umatilla County. Brown's announcement was followed by days of mandates with increasingly tight controls over daily life in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19.



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

UMATILLA COUNTY

Umatilla County declared a state of alert on March 12 before declaring a state of emergency six days later. Umatilla County's decision to declare a state of emergency fell in line with other regional counties and the city of Pendleton, and restricted access to public buildings.



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

CTUIR

The CTUIR Board of Trustees declared a state of emergency on March 2 after a Wildhorse Resort & Casino employee tested positive for COVID-19. CTUIR's initial reaction was followed by moratoriums on water service disconnects and evictions in tribal housing.

UMATILLA COUNTY — Within hours of Oregon Health Authority's March 2 announcement that Umatilla County had received its first case of novel coronavirus, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation declared a state of emergency.

It would take another 16 days for Umatilla County to follow suit.

According to Umatilla County Public Health Director Joe Fiumara, some county health department staff were preparing for COVID-19 in February before the first case even appeared in Oregon. But when a case appeared in Umatilla County, Fiumara also said the health department was scrambling to figure out how to adjust its phone systems to properly handle the sudden surge of calls because it had previously been set up for calls related to February's floods.

"The fact that we've had two of these back-to-back emergencies has stretched us pretty thin in a lot of areas," Fiumara said.

The county ultimately leaned on the state's resources and its 211 phone number to help field calls and answer questions. Meanwhile, Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock, the board of commissioners' public health liaison, booked an emergency flight home from the National Association of Counties' legislative conference in Washington, D.C., to support the health department.

Despite that, Fiumara and Umatilla County Public Health Officer Dr. Jon Hitzman said Friday they advised the board of commissioners against declaring an emergency until recently out of concern for creating more panic and because the county's first cases of COVID-19 hadn't overwhelmed them.

"There's always concern about public perception with this. We felt taking that step at that time would have driven more panic than it would have solved any problems that we were having," Fiumara said. "As things continued to escalate, of course, that decision evolved."

In the days that followed the tribes' emergency declaration, an incident command team was formed with a \$1 million budget, almost all tribal events were canceled, access to tribal government buildings was restricted and Wildhorse was partially closed to the public.

The tribes also advised residents not to travel more than 75 miles

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REPORTED CASES*

INTERNATIONAL: 275,225

DEATHS: 11,384

UNITED STATES: 15,219

U.S. DEATHS: 201

OREGON: 114

UMATILLA COUNTY: 2

MORROW COUNTY: 0

OREGON DEATHS: 3

*as of 5 p.m. Friday, March 20

Sources: Oregon Military Department's Office of Emergency Management, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Worldometer.com

FAQ

WHAT IS THE RISK OF MY CHILD BECOMING SICK WITH COVID-19?

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date. You can learn more about who is most at risk for health problems if they have COVID-19 infection on CDC's current Risk Assessment page.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 DIFFERENT IN CHILDREN THAN IN ADULTS?

No. The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults. However, children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally presented with mild symptoms. Reported symptoms in children include cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported. It's not known yet whether some children may be at higher risk for severe illness, for example, children with underlying medical conditions and special health care needs. There is much more to be learned about how the disease impacts children.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

SHOULD CHILDREN WEAR MASKS?

No. If your child is healthy, there is no need for them to wear a face mask. Only people who have symptoms of illness or who are providing care to those who are ill should wear masks.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

'Testing is the key to solving this pandemic'

COVID-19 test backlog frustrates local doctors

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — While President Donald Trump touts a dramatic upsurge in COVID-19 testing, three local physicians see it differently.

The doctors — Dr. Malcolm Townsley, Dr. Russell Harrison and Dr. Jonathan Hitzman — described long turnaround times and a shortage of testing supplies. Both state and commercial labs, they said, are swamped.

Townsley, an internist who works out of the clinic at St. Anthony Hospital, expressed frustration.

"Testing is the key to solving this pandemic," he said. "It's critical for hospitals to be able to test. Right now, we are treating patients (with symptoms similar to coronavirus) as if they have COVID-19. We're burning through gowns, masks and gloves. We're going to run out of this equipment soon."

During testing, provid-



Harrison



Hitzman



Townsley

ers use a several-inch swab to obtain a sample from the nasal passageway. The sample goes into a test tube filled with a viral preservative medium, and then is frozen for transport to a lab.

"The medium is in short supply," said Harrison, who practices family medicine in Pendleton. "That has been a real problem."

So far, none of the three

physicians has sent out a test, mostly because of daunting backlogs at the labs.

"If I did a test today, it would sit in my freezer for a week before the lab picked it up," said Harrison, adding that it would take at least a few more days for a result, maybe even a week or 10 days. By that time, a patient could be recovered or dead. "We really don't have any testing for the public for COVID-19."

"The idea that you can go to the doctor and get tested is inaccurate at this moment in this community," Townsley said.

Hitzman, who practices at Pendleton Family Medi-

cine and serves as Umatilla County health officer, said wryly that getting tested is about as likely as finding a roll of toilet paper. He was only half kidding.

Currently, there are two avenues for testing, the doctors said, and both take time.

The Oregon State Public Health Lab can test up to 80 samples per day, all from patients who have met the stringent CDC criteria for who can be tested. They include hospitalized patients with symptoms, symptomatic individuals with chronic medical conditions or health

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