

PGE donates fire equipment to Boardman fire district

Brush truck also included in donation

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

BOARDMAN — Boardman Rural Fire Protection District got a welcome boost recently with an extensive donation of equipment from Portland General Electric.

The energy company closed down the Boardman Generating Station, Oregon's last coal-fired power plant, in October as part of the deal with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Steven Corson, a PGE spokesperson, said in an email that the plant and fire district have had a long-standing relationship.

"The donated items were previously used for fire protection and readiness at the coal plant," he said. "Since it's no longer needed there or at our other plants, we thought donating it to support the local community



Firefighting turnouts and SCBA tanks pictured above show a small portion of a donation from Portland General Electric to Boardman Rural Fire Protection District.

Portland General Electric/Contributed Photo

would be the best thing we could do with it." Boardman Fire Chief

Mike Hughes said the large donation of vehicles, personal protective equip-

ment and other supplies was "invaluable." He said about 90% of it had already been

inventoried and put to use. "We didn't waste any time," he said.

Among the donations was a brush truck that will be put to use at the district's Butter Creek station, and an ambulance that has been outfitted specifically to respond to crashes and traffic rescues. PGE also donated 40 sets of turnouts, the heavy-duty clothing worn by firefighters for protection at fires.

"It's about \$2,000 per full set, so that's going to save us a significant amount of money on replacement," Hughes said.

Also on the donation list was dozens of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) tanks, and an air compressor to fill the tanks, which Hughes said will replace their "very old" and worn-out one.

He said PGE has always been a good partner to Boardman Rural Fire Protection District as they have trained together and planned together to keep PGE's facilities in the area safe, and the district is extremely grateful for the generosity of their donation.

Convention Center hosts COVID-19 testing event



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Testing staff instruct a driver on how to self-administer a COVID-19 test during a drive-thru testing event at the Pendleton Convention Center on Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2020. Roughly 50 people were preregistered for the event, though preregistration was not required for a test.

Commissioner-elect signs petition to plead guilty

Dan Dorran was arrested Sept. 26 for DUI and colliding with another vehicle

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Umatilla County Commissioner-elect Dan Dorran signed a petition on Monday, Dec. 14, to plead guilty to the charge of driving under the influence of intoxicants and declared eligibility for a DUII diversion program that same day, according to court records.

Dorran then signed an agreement with the Umatilla County Circuit Court on Tuesday, Dec. 22, to take part in the program, according to the records.

Dorran was arrested Sept. 26 for DUII and colliding with another vehicle in the city of Umatilla. No injuries were reported.

It has been nearly a month since Dorran pled not guilty in the Umatilla County Circuit Court to charges of DUII, reckless driving, recklessly endangering another person and refusal to take a test for intoxicants.

Dorran declined to comment on this story. A diversion program

provides the option for people who have not had a drunken driving arrest in the past 15 years to get their charge dismissed without conviction or jail time.



Dorran

To complete the program, one must pay the required diversion fees and restitution, complete an alcohol and drug abuse assessment and any recommended treatment, attend a victim impact panel as ordered by the court, not use alcohol or any other form of intoxicant unless otherwise specified by the court, keep the court-up-to-date on mailing address and, if ordered by the court, install and use an approved ignition interlock device in all their vehicles.

Dorran, a Republican, was elected to the non-partisan Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, Position 3, on Nov. 3, taking home 54% of the vote, according to voting data from the Oregon Secretary of State.

He is to be sworn in on Saturday, Jan. 2, 2021.

Dorran's next court appearance is a hearing for the diversion petition scheduled for Jan. 11, 2021.

Brown announces updates to county risk levels

East Oregonian

SALEM — Six Oregon counties, including Morrow County, moved out from under the governor's "extreme risk" designation for spreading COVID-19, according to a press release from Gov. Kate Brown's office.

In addition to Morrow County, Baker, Clatsop, Coos, Douglas and Lincoln counties were moved down to the "high risk" category. "After weeks of diligent work by local leaders and public health officials to implement health and safety measures in their communities, this week's county data is a welcome sign that we are making progress in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Oregon," Brown said in the press release.

The revised ratings go into effect Jan. 1, 2021.

There are 23 counties, including Umatilla and Union counties, that remain in the "extreme risk" category. No counties are considered "moderate risk," while there are seven counties in the "lower risk" category, including Wallowa County.

Counties are assigned one of four risk levels based on the spread of COVID-19 infections: extreme, high, moderate and lower. The higher the level, the more restrictions on activities, businesses and gatherings.

Brown praised the counties that moved down on the list, but said ratings can move up again if infection rates increase.

"If communities let down their guard too early, we could see our hard-won progress unravel just as quickly," Brown said.

The levels are reviewed every two weeks. The next

COUNTY RISK CATEGORIES

Lower Risk (7)

- Gilliam
- Grant
- Harney
- Lake (moved from moderate)
- Sherman
- Wallowa
- Wheeler

Moderate Risk (0)

- No counties

High Risk (6)

- Baker (moved from extreme)
- Clatsop (moved from extreme)

- Coos (moved from extreme)
- Douglas (moved from extreme)
- Lincoln (moved from extreme)
- Morrow (moved from extreme)

Extreme Risk (23)

- Benton
- Clackamas
- Columbia
- Crook
- Curry
- Deschutes
- Hood River
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Josephine
- Klamath
- Lane
- Linn
- Malheur
- Marion
- Multnomah
- Polk
- Tillamook
- Umatilla
- Union
- Wasco
- Washington
- Yamhill

report will be Jan. 15, 2021.

Baker County moved to the "high risk" category on Wednesday, Dec. 30, due to a corrected oversight in the initial risk level calculations for the county. The original data for calculating Baker County's risk level included nine cases from adults in custody at Powder River Correctional Facility in Baker City, which should not have been included in the county's risk level metrics.

Because adults in custody do not interact with members of the broader community, the Oregon Health Authority is subtracting these cases from Baker County's risk level calculation, something that is done with all other counties that have correctional facilities. This reduction in number of cases (from 68 to 59), along with the county's two-week positivity rate of 7.9%, allows for the move in categories.

Since February, the Oregon Health Authority has reported 110,545 positive tests for COVID-19 and 1,433 deaths.

There have been 19.3 million cases nationwide,

causing more than 335,000 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center. The center reports over 81.5 million cases worldwide, with 1.78 million deaths.

Every classification has different restrictions. When counties jump down in risk, restrictions ease slightly. For example, in high-risk counties, restaurants and bars can serve people indoors with limited occupancy. At the moderate level, restaurants can seat up to 50% capacity, with a maximum of 150 people. But even at the lowest risk level, counties will face limits on what is allowed. Bars and restaurants can allow up to 50% indoor capacity, which could be up to 300 people. Outdoor venues cannot exceed 300 people. Retail stores and indoor places of worship area also limited to 75% capacity.

The first doses of vaccines, however, have started arriving in Oregon, with St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton and Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston beginning vaccinations on Monday, Dec. 28. Ore-

gon hopes 100,000 people receive their first COVID-19 vaccines before the end of the year. Vaccines are being given first to essential workers, communities that have been hit hard by the disease and people who are particularly vulnerable for severe complications.

Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center began vaccinations of health care workers on Dec. 18.

"Every week, more Oregonians are being vaccinated against this deadly disease," Brown said in the press release. "But, until vaccines are widely available with high participation rates, the surest way to open our communities is to continue practicing the measures we know are effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19 — wear your mask, keep physical distance from others, avoid gatherings, wash your hands often, and stay home when you are sick."

Oregon Capital Bureau Reporter Gary A. Warner and Oregon Public Broadcasting reporter Lauren Dake contributed to this report.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Umatilla County announces 56th COVID-19 death

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Health Department announced the county's 56th COVID-19 death in a Wednesday, Dec. 30, press release.

The victim is a 72-year-old female who tested positive Nov. 28 and died Dec. 18 at Providence St. Mary Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington. This individual had underlying medical conditions, according to the press release.

The announcement comes as the health department reported 56 new cases on Dec. 30, bringing the county's total to 5,497 confirmed and presumptive coronavirus cases since the pandemic began.

Morrow County announced nine new cases

on Dec. 30, bringing its total to 805 cases. Morrow County has had eight deaths since the pandemic started earlier this year.

Tree recycling available in Hermiston

HERMISTON — As Hermiston residents take down their Christmas decorations, they can get rid of their trees at Butte Park.

Trees can be dropped off on the south side of the park next to the splash pad, in the marked area, until Jan. 31, 2021.

Trees should be real, not artificial, and be stripped of all lights, bulbs, tinsel and other decorations. At the end of January, they will be turned into mulch that will be used throughout the city's park system.

— EO Media Group

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