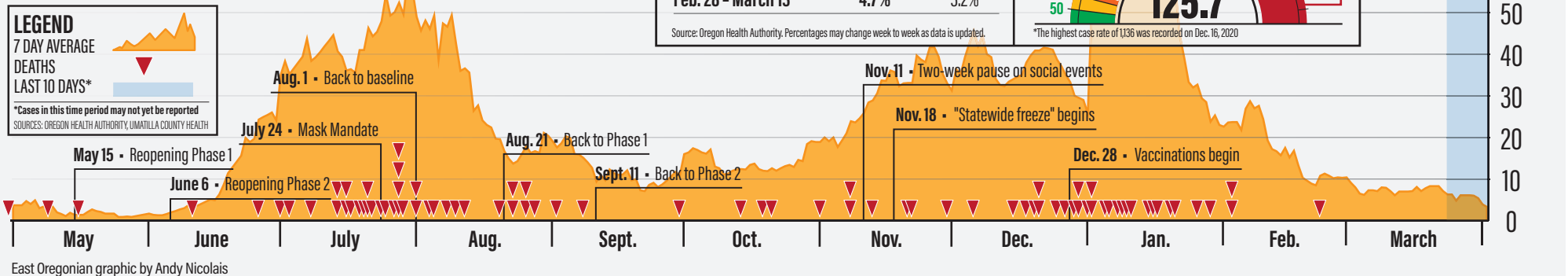


### UMATILLA COUNTY COVID-19 TREND - AS OF APRIL 2

Umatilla County cases: **7,877** (27 new cases this week)  
 Umatilla County deaths: **82** (0 new deaths reported this week)  
 Oregon cases: **166,013** (2,718 new cases this week)  
 Oregon deaths: **2,285** (12 new deaths reported this week)

Umatilla County vaccinations: **not available** (as of 12:01 a.m. 4/2/2021)



## Pendleton area sees near normal temps for March

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Pendleton area experienced near normal temperatures during the month of March, according to preliminary data received by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Weather Service Office in Pendleton.

The average temperature during the month was 45.4 degrees, 0.3 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged 57.7 degrees, 2.5 degrees above normal, according to the monthly climate summary.

The highest temperature was 73 degrees recorded on March 28.

Low temperatures averaged 33.1 degrees, 1.8 degrees below normal.

The lowest temperature for the month was 24



An American flag and state of Oregon flag tug against a flagpole outside of the Pendleton City Hall as high winds battered the region on Sunday, March 28, 2021.

degrees, recorded on March 11.

There were 11 days with the low temperature below 32 degrees, according to the monthly climate summary.

Precipitation for the

month totaled 0.32 inches, which was 1 inch below normal, the report said. Measurable precipitation — at least 0.01 inch — was received on seven days, with the heaviest, 0.06 inches,

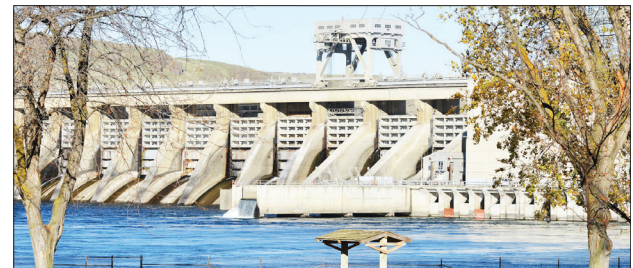
reported on March 19.

Precipitation for the year is 3.34 inches, more than a half-inch below normal. Since October 2020, the water year precipitation at the Pendleton airport has been 7.79 inches, 0.07 inches below normal.

Snowfall totaled a trace amount on March 15.

The highest wind gust was 73 mph on March 28, and two days when the wind exceeded 50 mph.

The outlook for April from NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center calls for near to below normal temperatures and near normal precipitation. Normal highs for the Pendleton airport rise from 59 degrees at the start of April to 66 degrees at the end of the month. Normal lows rise from 38 degrees to 42 degrees. The 30-year normal precipitation is 1.20 inches.



East Oregonian, File

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Walla Walla District officials have resumed use of bird-detering lasers, and will be testing a long-range acoustic device to prevent birds from preying on endangered juvenile salmon passing through McNary Dam.**

## McNary Dam using bird deterrent system

East Oregonian

UMATILLA — Officials with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Walla Walla District have resumed use of bird-detering lasers, and will be testing a long-range acoustic device to prevent birds from preying on endangered juvenile salmon passing through McNary Dam.

In a change from last year, the two lasers will be used simultaneously. Previously, only one of the two lasers owned by the dam were operational at any given time. One laser will be positioned on the navigational lock wing wall on the downstream side and will provide coverage of the fish outfall pipe and surrounding waters and facilities, including the dam itself.

The other laser will be positioned directly on the outfall pipe and cover the water directly below it.

The lasers, which will run from dawn to dusk daily, went into operation on Thursday, April 1, and will be in operation until approximately November.

The lasers emit a bright green light that creates a large dot. Birds interpret the dot as a solid object, which they avoid as a potential threat. The lasers are programmed to move in random patterns within a predetermined area and have a range of approximately 950

feet to 1 mile, depending on the weather.

The long-range acoustic device is scheduled to begin usage in late August. A small device, resembling a common speaker, it can broadcast preprogrammed audio tracks over a large area. When activated, the tracks act as an audio deterrent for birds. Similar devices have garnered success at airports across the United States.

Currently, McNary’s long-range acoustic device is programmed with two audio tracks. The first is a computer-generated male voice that announces it is a long-range acoustic device and performs a countdown. The second closely matches the noise emitted by a standard car alarm. When active, it will be audible throughout the McNary Dam and Lake Wallua area.

The long-range acoustic device will run intermittently throughout the day from late August through October. This period will serve as a trial run for the device. If the trial is deemed successful, the device will resume operations in 2022.

Safety and operational managers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have performed a variety of tests on both the lasers and long-range acoustic device systems and have confirmed they pose no adverse risk to humans or wildlife.

## Pipes blocked by tree roots cause sewer backup

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — A sewer line backed up along West Hartley Avenue in Hermiston on Wednesday, March 31.

Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said wastewater backed up into the basement of two homes on the 600 block of West Hartley Avenue during the evening. The city paid for O So Kleen to clean up the

homes, something Morgan said is standard when a city line was at fault. The cause of the backup was roots from trees in the vicinity of Third Street and Hartley working their way into the city’s sewer main and blocking it.

Morgan said root intrusions are common, and city crews clean more than 10,000 feet of sewer main each month to address the problem. He said one of the first sewer projects after the city created its

Capital Improvement Plan two years ago was to run a video camera down a “large percentage” of the city’s sewer lines to determine causes of clogging and figure out how to better fix and prevent them. The city now has \$1.9 million in sewer main replacements planned for the next five years.

The city asks residents to never dump grease down their drain or flush “flushable” wipes or baby wipes down the toilet. Wipes get

stuck on roots and then fats, such as bacon grease, congeal around the wipes, creating what the wastewater industry calls “fatbergs” that clog sewer mains.

A March 26 article by *Bloomberg News* reported that wipes flushed down the toilet previously caused cities in the United States about \$1 billion annually to clear out blockages, and cities are reporting an increase in those blockages since the pandemic began.

### LOCAL BRIEFING

#### Man arrested for alleged sexual abuse of minor

PENDLETON — A Pendleton man is facing charges for the alleged sexual abuse of a minor that police say occurred over the span of several years, according to a press release from the Pendleton Police Department.

Richard James Sheldon, 74, was indicted by a Umatilla County Grand Jury on March 24 on 19 counts, including first-, second- and third-degree sexual abuse and second- and third-degree sodomy, the press release said.

Police began investigating the sexual abuse allegations in February 2020. Police described it as a “protracted and complex investigation” that required detectives execute several search warrants that ultimately “revealed that the alleged sexual abuse occurred over a several year period between 2017 to 2020,” the press release said.

A warrant was issued for Sheldon’s arrest on Monday, March 29, after the Umatilla County District Attorney’s Office presented the case to the grand jury, which handed down the indictment. Police arrested Sheldon at his Pendleton residence at 15 SE 11th St. on Thursday, April 1.

Sheldon was then booked in the Umatilla County Jail, where he remains with a bail of more than \$2.3 million, according to the

jail’s website. The Umatilla County District Attorney’s Office is now in charge of the case, the press release said.

#### Two-year, I-84 construction project begins April 5

MEACHAM — Construction will slow traffic on Interstate 84 between Meacham and Spring Creek for the next two years.

The Oregon Department of Transportation will begin a new paving project between milepost 238 and 248 starting on Monday, April 5. During construction, vehicles will be rerouted to one side of the interstate at a time, with a single lane in each direction. The speed limit will be reduced to 50 miles per hour, and Oregon State Police will increase its patrol presence.

According to an email from ODOT, reconstruction of milepost 238 to 241.5 will take place in 2021 and the rest will be completed in 2022. ODOT will begin next week by closing the left lanes in each direction in order to

construct the “crossovers” needed for traffic to move onto the new travel route.

The email states the project will replace the asphalt that has become rutted from severe winter weather and chain use, creating hazardous conditions where ice collects in the ruts and cracks and cannot be removed by snow plows. Crews will also complete some other upgrades to guard rails, median barriers and bridges.

#### Morrow County vaccine clinics

MORROW COUNTY — The Morrow County Public Health Department is partnering with state and federal officials to hold several COVID-19 vaccine clinics in the coming weeks.

Officials with the Oregon Health Authority and the Federal Emergency Management Agency are assisting the health department in providing free Johnson & Johnson vaccines to eligible residents at the clinics, according to a press release.

Those eligible include frontline workers as defined

by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people from multigenerational households, people between the ages of 16 to 44 who have an underlying health condition that places them at risk, as well as all people previously eligible for the vaccine.

The first clinic will be held at the SAGE Center, 101 Olsen Road N.E., Boardman, on April 5 and 6 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and April 7 from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The second clinic will be held at AC Houghton Elementary School, 1105 N. Main Ave., Irrigon, on April 9 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. and April 10 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The third clinic will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds, 74473 Highway 74, Heppner, on April 12 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. and April 13 from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

— EO Media Group

**ALLELUIA!**

Come celebrate Easter with us at  
**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
 Holy Eucharist & Easter Liturgy  
 - 9:00 AM • April 4, 2021 -

We are resuming in-person worship with County Covid Guidelines in place.

665 E. Gladys Avenue, Hermiston

**WILDHORSE RESORT & CASINO**  
 4/2-4/8  
 Cineplex Show Times

Theater seating will adhere to social distancing protocols  
 Every showing \$7.50 per person (ages 0-3 still free)

**Godzilla Vs. Kong (PG13)**  
 1:20p 2:00p 4:20p  
 5:00p 7:20p 8:00p

**Nobody (R)**  
 1:40p 4:40p 7:40p

**Raya and the Last Dragon (PG)**  
 1:00p 4:00p 7:00p

**The Courier (PG13)**  
 12:40p 3:40p

**Chaos Walking (PG13)**  
 6:40p

wildhorseresort.com • 541-966-1850  
 Pendleton, OR I-84 - Exit 216

Join us for  
**RESURRECTION SUNDAY**  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 4TH**  
 AT **BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH**  
 8 NW 9th Street  
 Pendleton, OR  
**CALL: 541-276-5239**  
<https://m.facebook.com/bbcpendleton/>

**SERVICE TIMES:**  
 8:30am Early Service  
 9:00am Breakfast  
 10:00am Sunday School  
 11:00am Morning Svc  
 6:00pm Celebration Svc

Worship with us this  
 Easter Sunday.

#WORSHIPWITHUSONLINE

Sunday, April 4th 9:00am  
 go to  
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org>  
 Click on Easter General Conference