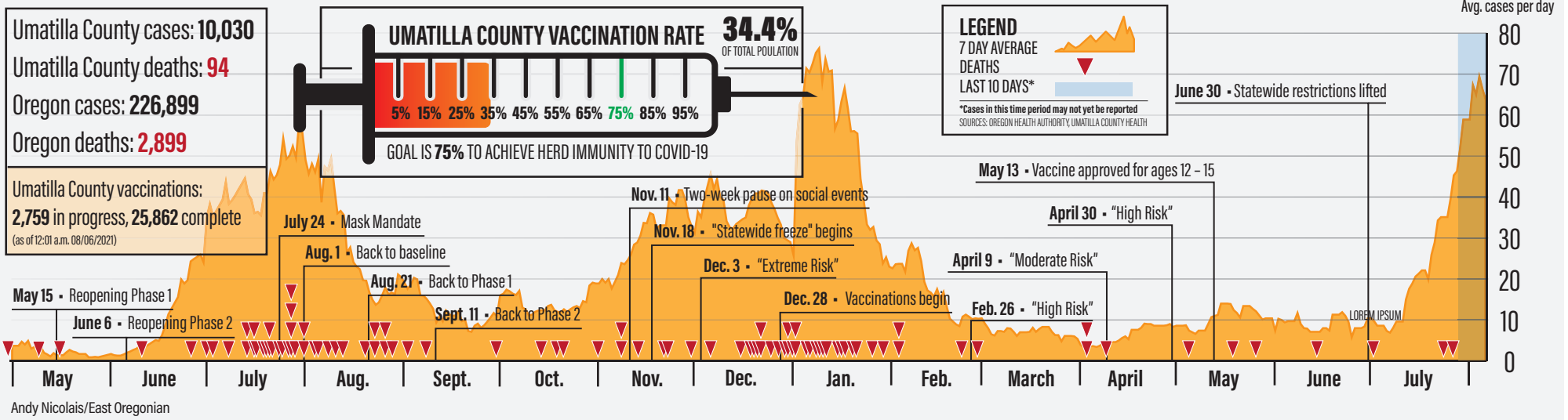


# UMATILLA COUNTY COVID-19 TREND - AS OF AUG. 6



# Area school districts to follow mask rules

By JEREMY BURNHAM  
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

MILTON-FREEWATER — As Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced last week, masks will have to be worn by all students and staff in Oregon schools after all.

While her announcement came on July 29, the document governing the upcoming school year, didn't come until Aug. 2.

Before, the state had announced it would issue recommendations that masks be required indoors at school,



Duff Vescio

but the final decision would be left to the districts.

The Milton-Freewater and Athena-Weston school districts had decided not to require masks for summer programs or when school starts up in the fall.

Now that the decision has

officially been made at that state level, leaders of both districts have responded.

"While this may not have been the direction that some in our community were hoping for, we continue to recognize the importance of getting students back to in-person school and returning to an environment that is safe and as normal as possible," Milton-Freewater Superintendent Aaron Duff said in a statement.

"As far as the current rule, things will look similar to how we ended the

'20-21 school year, with students and staff wearing masks inside buildings whether fully vaccinated or not during school hours," he said. "Efforts will be made to build schedules and opportunities for outside activities and/or mask breaks."

Duff said his district will begin following the rule on Aug. 9.

"This will allow time for us to inform students, families and staff about this rule change," he said.

Athena-Weston Superintendent Ann Vescio

confirmed her district would follow the new rules as well.

"The district will continue to adapt and adjust to changing conditions and requirements while providing as much stability and as many options as we are able," Vescio said in a statement. "I appreciate the patience, understanding and resilience of our students, families, staff and community as we navigate this pandemic together."

Brown's decision puts Oregon schools in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, as well as with Washington mandates from Gov. Jay Inslee.

Duff said he remains focused on the positive news of having students attend schools in-person.

"This (mask) change can be viewed as a setback, but we are looking forward to the start of the 2021-2022 school year," he wrote. "We are celebrating that students will be in person, and we have the resources and experience to offer instruction to students who are not able to attend in person."

# State discloses workplace outbreaks

Seven workplaces in Umatilla County make OHA weekly list — five in Pendleton, two in Hermiston

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Oregon Health Authority in its weekly outbreak report disclosed seven workplaces in Umatilla County facing active COVID-19 outbreaks.

Three of those workplaces are assisted living facilities in Pendleton.

The state publishes an active outbreak in nurs-

ing homes if the facility reports more than three cases, according to the state. The outbreak is considered resolved if no new cases are reported within 28 days of the last case. The local assisted living facilities are:

- Juniper House has reported seven COVID-19 cases since June 11. The facility also reported a COVID-19 death.
- Suttle Care & Retirement

ment Inc. reported three cases since July 17.

• McKay Creek Estates reported eight cases since July 21.

In addition, the state publishes a workplace outbreak when five or more cases are reported at a facility with 30 or more workers. Like assisted living facilities, the outbreak is considered resolved if no new cases are reported within 28 days of the last case.

The Oregon Health Authority reported local workplace outbreaks occurred at the following:

- Walmart Distribution

Center, Hermiston, reported 19 cases between its first reported case on April 26 and its most recent onset case coming July 26.

• Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, reported 10 cases between its first reported case on July 21 and its most recent onset case coming July 24.

• Keystone RV, Pendleton, reported 11 cases on July 28.

• Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, Pendleton, reported seven cases between its first reported case on July 12 and its most recent onset case coming July 25.

# State-funded grants boost local K-12 summer programs

East Oregonian

PORTLAND — Ten governments and organizations in Umatilla County received state-funded grants totaling \$575,997 for summer education and early childhood learning. The city of Hermiston received the lion's share on the local scene — \$200,000 for K-12 summer programming.

The grants were part of the \$41.2 million the Oregon Community Foundation distributed to 513 organizations in all 36 counties in Oregon, according to a press release from the foundation.

In mid-March, the state of Oregon announced a plan to allocate \$250 million to support summer learning and enrichment for children through grade 12. The state asked the Oregon Community Foundation to take on the role of awarding \$40 million for K-12 summer programs and \$1.2 million for parent-child programs serving children to age 5 and their parents. The following is a breakdown of the local grants:

- \$200,000 to the city of Hermiston for K-12 summer programming.
- \$125,997 to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation for K-12 summer programming.
- \$75,000 to Made to Thrive, Hermiston,

for K-12 youth summer programming.

• \$60,000 to Pendleton Parks and Recreation Department for K-12 summer programming.

• \$30,000 to Stanfield Public Library for K-12 youth summer programming.

• \$25,000 to the Arts Council of Pendleton for K-12 youth summer programming.

• \$15,000 to Impact Pendleton for marketing, background checks and other operating expenses to support the Impact Mentoring Program for children grades 3-12..

• \$15,000 to Cub House, Ukiah, for staff wages, materials, and play equipment summer youth development programming for children K-12.

• \$15,000 to the Oregon East Symphony, Pendleton, for K-12 youth summer programming.

• \$15,000 to Youth for Christ/Blue Mountain, Hermiston, for K-12 youth summer programming.

And in Morrow County, the Heppner Community Foundation received a \$15,160 grant to support summer gardening education programming for children K-12.

Max Williams, president and CEO of the foundation, said in the press release this summer is a critical time to nurture and mentor children in Oregon given the crises during the last year.

# Umatilla County tax boss warns of tax scam

By BRYCE DOLE  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Umatilla County's tax collector is warning of a potential tax scam to get money from residents by posing as the county's tax processing unit.

The fraudulent notice from issuer "J.S. Brown," poses as a "final notice" that says the state of Oregon can seize assets and garnish wages and bank accounts due to unpaid tax liability. It says the state can "permanently

revoke benefits, suspend licenses, and levy any federal tax refund gained this year" if action isn't taken.

But the notice, according to Rachael Reynolds, Umatilla County's assessment and taxation director, did not come from the assessor's office and lacks the county's insignia.

"It's definitely not ours," she said.

Also, Reynolds said, the state of Oregon does not garnish wages or bank accounts.

Officials in San Bernardino, California, and Bedford, Indiana, have raised warnings over the potential scheme from J.S. Brown.

Reynolds said people with questions should call her office at 541-278-6234. People who receive the scam should not call the phone number on the document or send any money.

Sondra Sundquist, a bookkeeper in Walla Walla, brought the notice to the attention of the county. The

notice from J.S. Brown warns a Milton-Freewater business it needs to pay \$10,000 in penalties for tax liability. But to her, it felt off.

"It looks, front and back, all nice and formal and official," she said. "But when people send me notices and say, 'Hey, you have a couple days to send me \$10,000,' I kind of pay attention."

She added that, because it is near the end of the quarter, "this is the time of year that those notices are being sent out."

## LOCAL BRIEFING

### Bank of America donates masks to CTUIR

PORTLAND — The Bank of America announced Wednesday, Aug. 4, that it was donating face masks, gloves and hand sanitizer to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

The Umatilla Indian Reservation has seen a surge of new COVID-19 cases in the past few weeks and recently held a mass testing event. Bank of America has donated \$2.7 million to organizations across Oregon and southwest Washington to aid local pandemic recovery efforts.

Bank of America also

announced it was donating \$150,000 to the Hillsboro-based Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center to provide a mobile vaccination clinic to the Latino communities in Washington and Yamhill counties, citing the state's 45.7% vaccination rate with Hispanic residents.

According to the Oregon

Health Authority, only one-third of Latinos living in Umatilla, Union, Baker and Walla counties are vaccinated. OHA doesn't publish demographic data for those individual counties, but Umatilla County has more than 90% of the Latino population among them.

— EO Media Group

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**WE'RE BACK!**

HERMISTON, OREGON ★ 7:45 NIGHTLY

**AUG. 11-12-13-14**

TICKETS:  
[farmcityprorodeo.com](http://farmcityprorodeo.com)

**541-564-8500**

Tickets include Free Admission to the Umatilla County Fair

**PENDLETON LIONS FOUNDATION**  
 Would like to say **THANK YOU** to the following businesses and individuals that assisted us in our recent **Can and Bottle Drive!**

Dr. Robert A. Pratt-DMD P.C.  
 D&B Supply  
 City of Pendleton Fire Department  
 CHI St. Anthony Hospital  
 Heritage Station Museum  
 Pediatric Specialists of Pendleton  
 East Oregonian  
 Liam Hughes  
 Pendleton City Parks and Recreation Dept.  
 City of Pendleton PD  
 Dave's Chevron  
 DG Gifts

Missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and our generous community members!

With your help we had a successful drive. We are putting our proceeds to work to continue assistance to our wonderful Community

**CONCEALED CARRY PERMIT CLASS**

**SATURDAY AUGUST 21ST**  
 Hermiston Ranch & Home  
 9AM & 12PM CLASSES

Multi-State \$80  
Oregon Included No Fee  
 Oregon Only \$45

**MULTI-STATE**

Valid 35-States, including Washington

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