

Region posts highest covid rate in the state of Oregon

The three counties of Central Oregon, as of late October, had the highest rate of new Covid-19 infections in the state.

The Oregon Health Authority report lists the total number of cases, the cases per 100,000 residents and positive test rates of all counties with a population over 2,000.

A key indicator is the per capita number—the rate of cases per 100,000 residents—allowing for a comparison between counties of different sizes.

At the end of October, Jefferson County had the highest per capita: 542 new cases per 100,000 people.

Crook County had 469 new cases per 100,000 people; and Deschutes County 401 new cases per 100,000 people.

For comparison: The statewide rate was 192 cases per 100,000 people.

Sherman County—the state's second least populous county—had a rate of 791 cases per 100,000.

Since late June, the delta variant drove infections, hospitalizations and deaths to new records for the pandemic that first reached Oregon in February 2020.

The Oregon Health Authority reported the variant attacked the unvaccinated. While breakthrough cases of Covid-19 have risen somewhat during the spike, those who have received immunization account for less than 5 percent of cases requiring hospitalization and under 1 percent of deaths.

The spike peaked just after La-

bor Day and then began a steep drop, but at a rate slower than public health officials had initially forecasted.

The Deschutes County numbers in the risk report issued Monday are significant in that they are so high for a county with a large population. The 2020 U.S. Census put the population at 198,253.

While the per-capita rates are higher in Jefferson and Crook counties, both are in decline. Deschutes County cases were rising.

All three Central Oregon counties have test positivity rates above 10 percent over the past week—twice the rate that state officials have said can be controlled by public health measures.

The state average was 7.3 percent, but falling.

Richard 'Dick' Montee ~ Celebration of Life

Please join Dick's family for the Celebration of his Life on Saturday, November 27 from 1-3 p.m.

We will be meeting at the Jefferson County Community Center, 860 SW Madison, Madras.

Howlak Tichum

Diane Pittock Perkins ~ 1942-2021

Diane Pittock Perkins passed peacefully at her home in Fairbanks, Alaska, on October 27, 2021. She overcame two tumor surgeries in her 70s and was lively until recent months, when her heart started to fail. The family is very grateful to Fairbanks Memorial Hospital and especially the hospice care she received in her last weeks.

Diane was born February 19, 1942, in Portland. She graduated from Portland's Lincoln High School in 1960, where she starred in tennis and golf. Always active and adventurous, she raced and rallied sports cars as a member of the Cascade Sports Car Club.

She worked for Joie Smith's Ski Shop and Alpine Towing in Rhododendron, where Diane participated in moun-



tain rescues and assistance by road and horseback. While working in the Cascades, Diane was given the honorable position of dog sitter for Timberline Lodge's famous St. Bernards. Additionally, her beloved dog Kosi was a gift from the Warm Springs Reservation.

The Warm Springs tribe also let her participate in tribal fishing near Celilo Falls, a great honor for someone who was not a member of the tribe. Diane will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

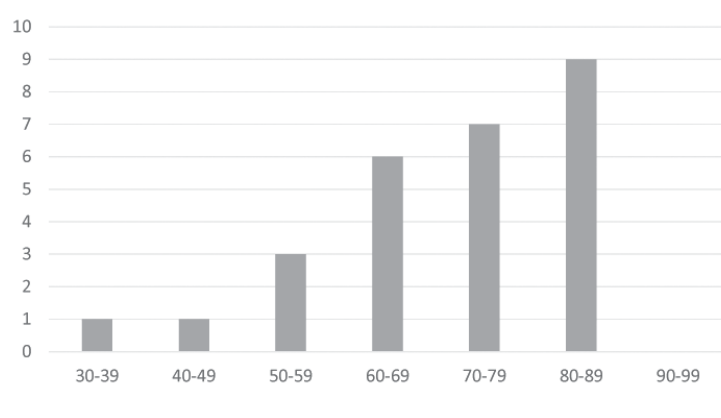
Community covid demographics

Since the covid pandemic began in the spring of 2020, a total of 27 members of the tribal community have passed away due to the illness, according to the latest Community Health demographics report.

Ninety-one people have been hospitalized with covid. At the time of the recent report, November 10, there were no hospitalization due to covid.

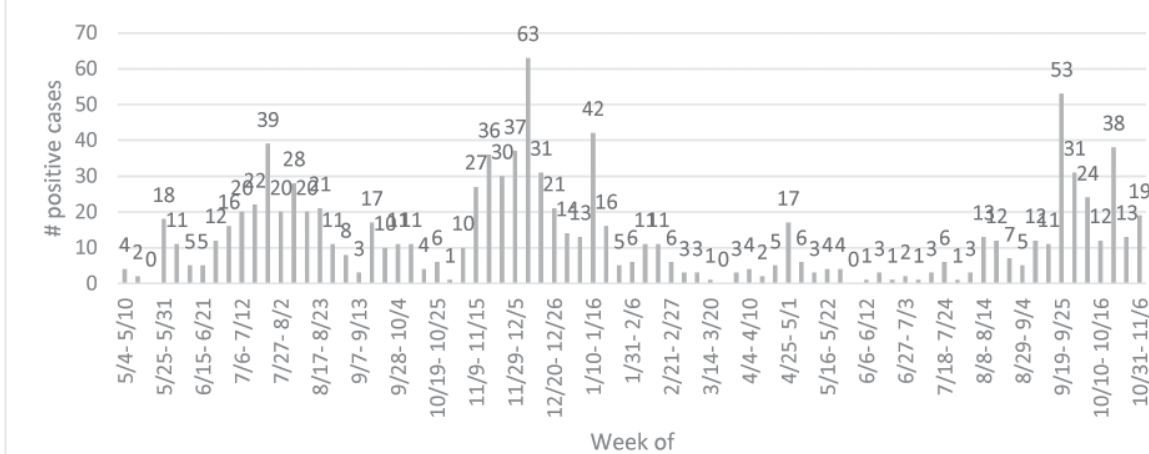
The most recent covid death was on November 6.

Ages: Cumulative Deaths 11.10.2021

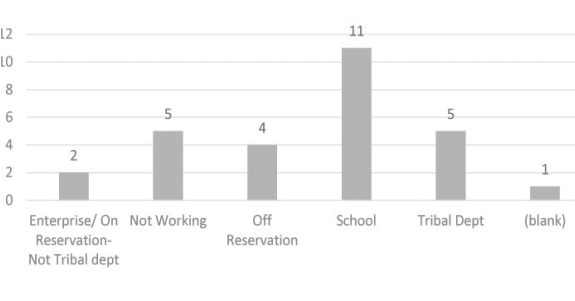


Cumulative Cases

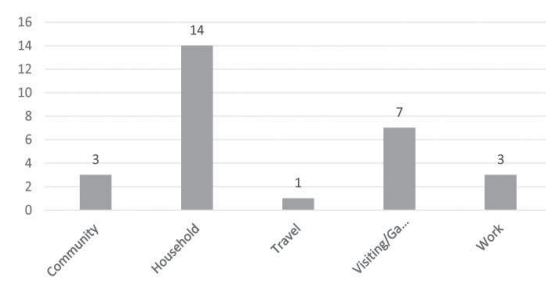
Warm Springs COVID-19 Epi Curve



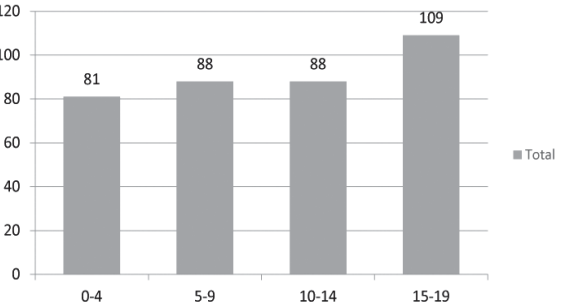
Workplace: Active Cases 11.10.2021



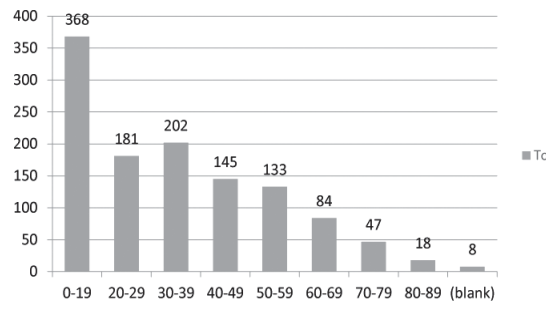
Place of Exposure: Active Cases 11.10.2021



Child Ages: Cumulative Cases 11.10.2021



Ages: Cumulative Cases 11.10.2021



Portland IHS Area sees lowest covid percent

The national office of the Indian Health Services updated its coronavirus data through November 9: According to the data, 277,984 tests have returned positive for Covid-19 across U.S. Indian Country.

That represents an increase of 0.8 percent from the number of IHS diagnosed cases from the two days before.

Altogether, IHS has conducted 3,291,974 coronavirus tests across all of Indian Country. That represents an increase of 0.7 percent

from two days prior.

Since mid-October of 2020, the IHS has been providing additional information about the spread of the coronavirus within the system.

These numbers represent the totals since the pandemic began last year.

Based on the cumulative percent positive, the highest rates have been seen in five areas. Two of them include the state of Arizona, indicating a disproportionate toll of Covid-19 in the state. The high numbers are as follows:

Navajo Area, 13.7 positivity percentage rate. The Phoenix Area, 12.6 percent.

The Oklahoma City Area, 12.3 percent. The California Area, 10.3 percent. The Albuquerque Area, 9.7 percent.

The seven-day rolling average positivity column offers a more contemporary look at the impact of the coronavirus. The data shows where covid cases have been increasing recently.

Based on the seven-day rolling average positivity, all 12 IHS areas

are seeing high covid rates, marking yet another instance of surges across every region of Indian Country. The numbers by IHS area are as follows:

The Albuquerque Area, 14.7 percent. Navajo Area, 14.3 percent. The Bemidji Area, 14.3 percent.

Tucson Area, 13.9 percent. Phoenix Area, 9.6 percent. The Great Plains Area, 8.8 percent.

Billings Area, 8.3 percent. Alaska Area, 7.8 percent.

California Area, 7.8 percent. Oklahoma City Area, 6.3 percent. Nashville Area, 6.1 percent. **The Portland Area, 5.5 percent.**

Notably, the seven-day rolling average positivity for the Alaska Area has steadily grown in recent weeks. The region recorded its

highest-ever rate with the release of data in October, and the rate has stayed consistently high.

Throughout most of the pandemic, the Alaska Area had seen the lowest rate of covid cases within the IHS.

Overall, 9.0 percent of IHS tests have been positive since the onset of the pandemic, the data shows. Meanwhile, the seven-day average stands at 9.6 percent following a long period of far lower rates in the spring of 2021.

The data, however, is incomplete. While 100 percent of facilities run directly by the IHS are reporting data, only 33 percent of tribally managed facilities and 44 percent of urban Indian organizations are doing the same, the agency has said.

Oregon coastal tribes hope to bring back sea otters

More than a century ago, sea otters were hunted to near extinction along the West Coast.

The animals have been reintroduced along the Washington, British Columbia and California coasts, but an attempt to bring them back to Oregon in the early 1970s failed. A local nonprofit is advocating for another attempt.

The lives of sea otters were once intertwined with those of the coastal tribes in Oregon. But when fur traders discovered the value of the warm, waterproof pelts, a global trade led to the near extinction of the animals. Now, local Native Americans are hoping to bring them back.

Peter Hatch, a member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, began learning about the relationship between his people and the otters when he and his father built a boat and needed a name for it.

"My dad happened across elakha, for sea otter, in a Chinook jargon dictionary," Mr. Hatch said.

Hatch and his father delved into the history of otters and became interested in bringing them back.

"We survived and the sea otters didn't," Hatch says. "That leaves us with a level of responsibility to undo the wrongs that all people, whatever their particular background—we've had our own small part in committing."



His father founded the Elakha Alliance about 20 years ago to advocate for returning sea otters to Oregon. The older Hatch has passed away, but today the Alliance has the blessing of three coastal tribes. Hatch is the group's secretary.

"It is about restoring that relationship," he says, "about bringing back a relative."

The Elakha Alliance has commissioned a feasibility study looking at the biology, ecology, economics and cultural impacts of reintroducing otters. An unanswered question is why the 1970 effort to move some Alaska otters to Oregon failed. But during the long years otters have been away, a shellfish industry has grown lucrative in the very waters where the otter restoration would take place.

More than 800 people in Oregon and California hold commercial permits for Dungeness crab and they employ many others who also rely on the fishery. Sea otters eat up to 15 pounds of shellfish a day, a potential conflict with the industry.