

Boardman tells residents: Drinking water is safe

BY ERICK PETERSON
East Oregonian

BOARDMAN — Boardman is working to ensure its residents know they can drink the city's water as the Port of Morrow deals with a \$2.1 million state fine for excessively spreading nitrogen-rich wastewater as fertilizer on area farmland for years.

The city even posted this message on a sign near city hall: "The city's water is safe to drink."

City Manager Karen Pettigrew explained city of Boardman residents receive safe and dependable water supplied from local aquifers different from their rural neighbors.

"This isn't a new issue for us," she said.

Pettigrew said she drinks city water and has done so for years and does not filter the water she receives from the tap.

Things were different, she said, when she was living "in the county." Back then, she

bought and consumed bottled water.

Pettigrew said city water is on a quarterly testing schedule. The most recent test results are from Jan. 20, she said, which show nitrates at 4.77 parts per million. According to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, nitrate levels above 10 ppm "may present a serious health concern for infants and pregnant or nursing women."

Pettigrew said many people do not know the facts about their drinking water and some people believe mistruths that have been popularized on social media.

Over at Sam Boardman Elementary, workers have been filling up water containers from a fire hydrant. This water, sourced from the city of Boardman, is safe to drink, they said.

Zaira Sanchez, director of community organizing for Oregon Rural Action, was among the helpers at the school.



Erick Peterson/East Oregonian

Community organizer Ana Maria Rodriguez adjusts water flow June 24, 2022, at Sam Boardman Elementary in Boardman. Clean water was made available at the school during Morrow County's water emergency.

"We're here, ready to distribute water to the community for people who have private wells, who might have water contaminated by nitrates," she said.

She added she and other

people at the school are providing water to people who are unsure about whether their water is contaminated, perhaps as they wait for a test result.

This issue, she said, is meaningful to her.

"I work here in Morrow County," Sanchez said, "knowing that our community's affected by this concerns me."

Sanchez said she identifies as Latinx. This group, she said, "hasn't largely known about this issue" and has not been fully informed. Fluent in English and Spanish, she said she can communicate with people who only know a single language.

Ana Maria Rodriguez, community organizer, agreed with the importance of communicating facts in multiple languages. Working at Sam Boardman with Sanchez, she said most of the people she encountered only know Spanish. Without the assistance of other Spanish speakers, these people would not be provided with information.

Ana Pineyro, Morrow County communicable disease and emergency preparedness coordinator, was working alongside Sanchez and Rodriguez. She said she frequently

encounters people who do not have all the facts, regardless of whether they speak Spanish or English.

Some people, she said, inaccurately believe boiling water will make it safe for drinking. The truth, Pineyro said, is very different.

"With nitrates, this is not true," she explained, because boiling water increases nitrate concentration.

Also, she said, many people don't think about all the ways that they use water. They will avoid drinking glasses of water, but they use it for cooking or preparing coffee. These uses, she said, still are dangerous.

She said she wants people to take this issue seriously. Nitrates, Pineyro said, are infamous for adversely affecting children and pregnant people. What people might not know, however, is that nitrates can be bad for other people, too, especially if the nitrates are consumed in high quantities over a long period of time.

Measure to avert legislative walkouts qualifies for Nov. 8 ballot

BY PETER WONG

Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Voters will decide on a measure aimed at deterring legislative walkouts by disqualifying lawmakers from seeking reelection if they have 10 or more unexcused absences.

The measure will appear on the Nov. 8 statewide ballot.

The Oregon Elections Division has announced that the proposed constitutional amendment qualified with 155,343 signatures, more than the 149,360 required under the Oregon Constitution. Sponsors submitted 184,680 signatures on May 27. Verification is usually done via sampling.

The measure will join two others referred by the 2021 Legislature. One would declare health care a right under the Constitution. The other would remove constitutional language allowing slavery, known as "involuntary servitude," as a punishment for crime.

A pending measure would set new requirements for firearms permits and limit ammunition magazines to 10 rounds. The deadline for submit-

tal of signatures is Friday. The measure requires 112,020 signatures to qualify, and state officials would have 30 days to verify them.

The Oregon Constitution sets different requirements for signatures to qualify constitutional amendments (8%) and proposed laws (6%), based on the votes cast for governor in the most recent election.

Walkouts prompt action

The Constitution requires the presence of two-thirds of the members in each chamber — 20 of 30 in the Senate, 40 of 60 in the House — to conduct any business. In most other legislative chambers throughout the nation, the requirement is usually a simple majority of the members.

The measure was launched with the support of public employee unions opposed to walkouts by Republican minorities in the 2019, 2020 and 2021 legislative sessions.

Andrea Kennedy-Smith, a welfare worker from McMinnville, is a chief petitioner for the measure.

"If I didn't show up to work or if I

made it impossible for other people to do their jobs, I would lose my job," she said when the signature-gathering drive began last year. "Republican senators even staged a walkout this year (2021) — in the middle of the pandemic — as families were struggling with job loss, extra caregiving duties, and the fear of illness just from going to the grocery store. This is why we have to come together and take a stand with these measures."

Advocates floated other proposals but concentrated on one.

Senate Republicans walked out in 2019 to stall a vote on a proposed corporate activity tax earmarked for school improvements. The vote went ahead after majority Democrats shelved some of their other legislative priorities for the session, and the bill passed despite Republican opposition.

Senate Republicans walked out in 2019, and Senate and House Republicans did so in 2020, to stall votes on proposed climate-change legislation. Senate Republicans returned in 2019 after Democrats announced they did not have the votes to pass it. But in 2020, the walkouts in both chambers

prompted Democrats to shut down that session a few days before the deadline — and blocked action on a host of bills, not just climate change. Democratic Gov. Kate Brown then issued an executive order for the Environmental Quality Commission to come up with a plan to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

Senate Republicans walked out again in 2021, but only for a single day — and it was in protest of some of Brown's executive orders during the coronavirus pandemic.

In the past

House Democrats walked out for a week in 2001, when the Republican majority attempted to pass redistricting plans via resolution, which is not subject to a veto by the governor. Democrats returned after Senate leaders from both parties said they would have nothing to do with the House's proposed action.

Both chambers, then controlled by Republicans, passed redistricting plans that were vetoed by Democratic Gov. John Kitzhaber.

The Supreme Court ruled later in

the year, when it largely upheld a legislative redistricting plan drawn up by Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, that legislators could not enact a redistricting plan via resolution, only through the normal process of legislation.

In 1971, during a fight over whether 18-year-olds should be allowed to vote in state elections, Senate Democrats walked out to block an attempt to undo the legislation. Advocates seized their chance when the Senate president became acting governor in the absence of Tom McCall, who was out of state, and could not preside over the Senate. (The line of succession changed in 1972 — the secretary of state is now next in line — and the governor remains governor during out-of-state travels.)

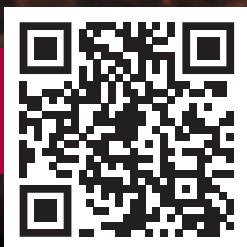
The Senate president was one of two Democrats who joined 14 Republicans in what became the most recent coalition to run the Senate. The coalition lasted from 1957 through 1972.

The legislation passed, just before ratification of the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which set the national voting age at 18.



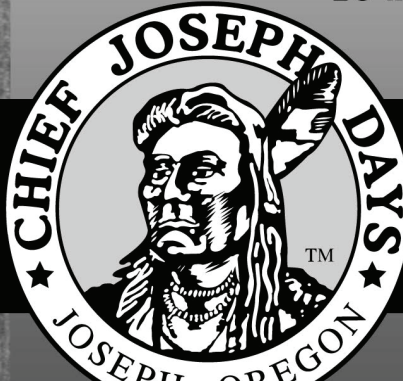
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TUES	1:30pm	Bucking Horse Stampede — Main Street
WED	9:30am	Little Buckaroo Special Needs Rodeo
	2:00pm	Slack — Arena
	6:00pm	Rodeo Gates Open — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	9:00pm	Family Fun at the Thunder Room — DJ
THUR	9:00am	Tough Enough to Wear Pink Walk
	9:00am	Steer Tripping, Three Rounds
	2:00pm	Slack — Arena
	6:00pm	Rodeo Gates Open — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
		Tough Enough to Wear Pink — Wear Pink
	9:00pm	Fun at Thunder Room after Rodeo — Stay Tuned!
FRI	10:00am	Chief Joseph Junior Parade — Main Street
	2:00pm	Slack — Arena
	6:00pm	Rodeo Gates Open — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	9:00pm	All Teen Dance — Joseph Community Center
	9:30pm	Live Music and Dancing at Thunder Room — Whiskey Creek
SAT	10:00am	Grand Parade — Main Street
	2:30pm	Slack — Arena
	6:00pm	Rodeo Gates Open — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	7:00pm	PRCA RODEO — Harley Tucker Memorial Arena
	9:00pm	All Teen Dance — Joseph Community Center
	9:30pm	Live Music and Dancing at Thunder Room — Whiskey Creek
		After Rodeo — Cowboy Breakfast — Rodeo Grounds — til 3:00am
SUN	6:00am	Cowboy Breakfast — Rodeo Grounds — til 10:00am
	9:00am	Cowboy Church Service

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