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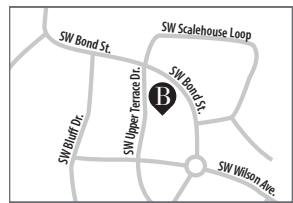
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Lottery results can now be found on the second page of Sports.

## LOCAL, STATE & REGION

### DESCHUTES COUNTY New COVID-19 cases per day

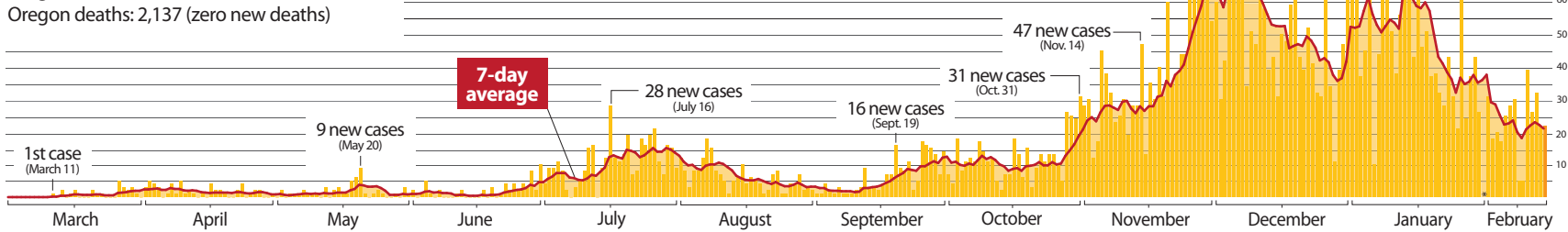
SOURCES: OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY, DESCHUTES COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES, BULLETIN GRAPHIC

**COVID-19 data for Sunday, Feb. 14:**

Deschutes County cases: 5,714 (22 new cases)  
Deschutes County deaths: 56 (zero new deaths)  
Crook County cases: 746 (3 new cases)  
Crook County deaths: 18 (zero new deaths)  
Jefferson County cases: 1,884 (2 new cases)  
Jefferson County deaths: 27 (zero new deaths)  
Oregon cases: 150,281 (254 new cases)  
Oregon deaths: 2,137 (zero new deaths)

**What is COVID-19?** It's an infection caused by a new coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that can cause a range of symptoms. Some usually cause mild illness. Some, like this one, can cause more severe symptoms and can be fatal. Symptoms include fever, coughing and shortness of breath.

**7 ways to help limit its spread:** 1. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. 2. Avoid touching your face. 3. Avoid close contact with sick people. 4. Stay home. 5. In public, stay 6 feet from others and wear a cloth face covering or mask. 6. Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue or cough into your elbow. 7. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



## Lawmakers on pace to consider close to 4,000 bills

**HILLARY BORRUD**

The Oregonian

Oregon lawmakers are on track to introduce the highest number of bills in a decade, suggesting the overwhelming majority of them won't get even a momentary hearing as the Legislature operates mostly online until at least April due to the pandemic.

House Speaker Tina Kotek told reporters this week that she expects the total number of bills could approach 4,000. If that happens, it would be the most pieces of legislation to be introduced in an Oregon legislative session since at least 2009, according to The Oregonian/OregonLive's analysis of legislative data.

Nearly one month into the five-month session, the avalanche of bills reflects the lack of a clear focus for the 2021 session among the state's top Democratic leaders. Kotek, D-Portland, has said the state's wildfire recovery and COVID-19 response efforts — which lawmakers also worked on in special sessions and emergency

board meetings in 2020 — continue to be among her top priorities, along with legislation to broadly address homelessness and housing affordability and racial injustice and inequities.

"We're really encouraging our (committee) chairs to prioritize, go for the urgent, go for the things that are of most import right now for Oregonians," Kotek told reporters in a question-and-answer session on Monday.

The speaker said it takes more time and planning to hold virtual hearings on legislation. Kotek has said lawmakers might not meet in-person to hold floor votes on bills until April due to COVID-19. In the meantime, they are holding virtual committee hearings and committee votes and meeting for weekly floor sessions to introduce new bills.

According to The Oregonian/OregonLive's analysis, lawmakers had introduced more than 2,100 bills as of Tuesday. Legislative lawyers have completed or are still

drafting more than 3,700 legislative measures, Kotek's spokesperson Danny Moran wrote in an email Wednesday.

The highest number of bills introduced since 2009 was 3,020 in 2011, The Oregonian/OregonLive found. Only a fraction of the proposals pass each session. In the 2017 session, 2,829 were introduced and 810 passed. In 2019, 2,768 were introduced and 757 passed. Those figures include required resolutions to conclude the sessions.

The House has 23 committees and subcommittees this year, compared with 13 in the last five-month session in 2019. The Senate has 13 committees this year, the same as in 2019.

In an interview Wednesday, Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said he was surprised to hear the number of bills was so high and concerned about managing lawmakers' expectations since most pieces of legislation will not pass.

"I can't quite understand where all these bills are coming from or why there's such an

increase," Courtney said. "It's got me very concerned because we're not gonna pass that many bills by a long shot ... That always makes the session more difficult, more agitated."

Courtney said some of the legislation was revived after it failed to pass last year when Republicans walked out of the Capitol to kill a climate bill. He also noted that duplicative bills can contribute to the issue, such as legislation that both he and Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athens, introduced to require insurers to cover proton beam therapy if they cover radiation for cancer. Only one of those bills is necessary, Courtney said.

Meanwhile, at least four least four bills would require the Department of Transportation to "study development of uniform standards for speed bump height and markings," including one for which Kotek is the chief sponsor. Many bills this session could be categorized as instructing state agencies to study a various topic and report back to the Legislature in the future. On Tuesday, the House in-

troduced 68 new bills including House Bill 3153, which would change Oregon laws on public health emergencies that Gov. Kate Brown has relied upon to issue restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19. It would allow the governor to declare such emergencies for only 14 days, with the ability to extend the emergency once for an additional 14 days. After that, the only option would be for the Legislature to meet to vote on whether to declare an emergency.

Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane, introduced the bill at the request of Neil Ruggles, the owner of a martial arts business in Washington County who joined state Reps. Werner Reschke, R-Klamath Falls and Mike Nearman, R-Independence, and state Sen. Dennis Linthicum, R-Klamath Falls, to file a lawsuit that claimed the governor abused her authority by issuing stay-home and other coronavirus orders. With Democrats in control of both chambers of the Legislature, it stands little chance of passing.

## Pace of wildfire cleanup frustrates many owners

**BY VICKIE ALDOUS**

Mail Tribune (Medford)

Crews expect to finish cleaning up charred debris at the Bear Lake Estates manufactured home park in Phoenix this week, but some property owners in the Alameda Fire scar are pulling out of the government-funded cleanup project.

"More and more people are getting frustrated with the pace," said John Vial, director of the Jackson County Emergency Operations Center.

The state is managing the cleanup effort and using contractors to carry out the work in the aftermath of the September 2020 Alameda fire that burned from Ashland to the outskirts of Medford, destroying major sections of Phoenix and Talent.

After federal Environmental Protection Agency crews picked out hazardous debris, contractors hired by the state began cleaning up general debris in January, including burned cars and the twisted metal frames of manufactured and mobile homes.

The work started with two crews but is now being carried out by eight crews, Vial said.

Jackson County has seen owners of 204 properties pull out of the general debris cleanup effort. Owners of more than 800 properties still want to take part, Vial said Wednesday.

"Frankly, if it's getting cleaned up and they can do it themselves, more power to them. Our goal is to get this mess cleaned up, and if they feel comfortable doing it themselves, great, go clean it up," he said. "Many of the people can't. The majority of people will want the state to step in and help and that process is starting to speed up now."

People who clean up property themselves or hire contractors to do the work must follow applicable laws about the disposal of different types

of debris, city and county officials have cautioned.

The EPA crews that picked out hazardous debris did remove chunks they suspected contained asbestos. But small particles of asbestos may be scattered in the Alameda fire zone.

The state is having asbestos testing done. If areas are found to be free of contamination, that can speed up cleanup efforts.

However, the state doesn't have enough asbestos testers on board. It's working to get more, Vial said.

"But that right now is the biggest holdup to doing a quicker cleanup," he said.

After crews finish cleaning up the 210-space Bear Lake Estates, they'll move on to another large park — Mountain View Estates mobile home park in Talent, Vial said.

Before that park burned, it had 164 sites, according to the MHVillage website for the buying, selling and renting of mobile and manufactured homes.

Cleanup efforts will stay focused on mobile home parks for a while because they're compact and represent a large amount of housing. Getting the parks cleaned will maximize the opportunity to re-house people, Vial said.

"It's about how can we do the most good the quickest," he said.

The Alameda fire destroyed almost 2,500 residential structures and damaged more than 100 additional homes — leaving thousands of local residents homeless.

Five months after the fire, the number of homeless residents seeking shelter in hotels continues to grow.

Last week, 581 fire survivors were staying in 295 hotel rooms.

This week, the number grew to 619 fire survivors in 324 hotel rooms, Vial said.

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