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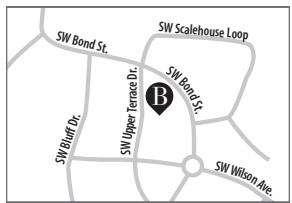
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Lottery results can now be found on the second page of Sports.

## LOCAL, STATE & REGION

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

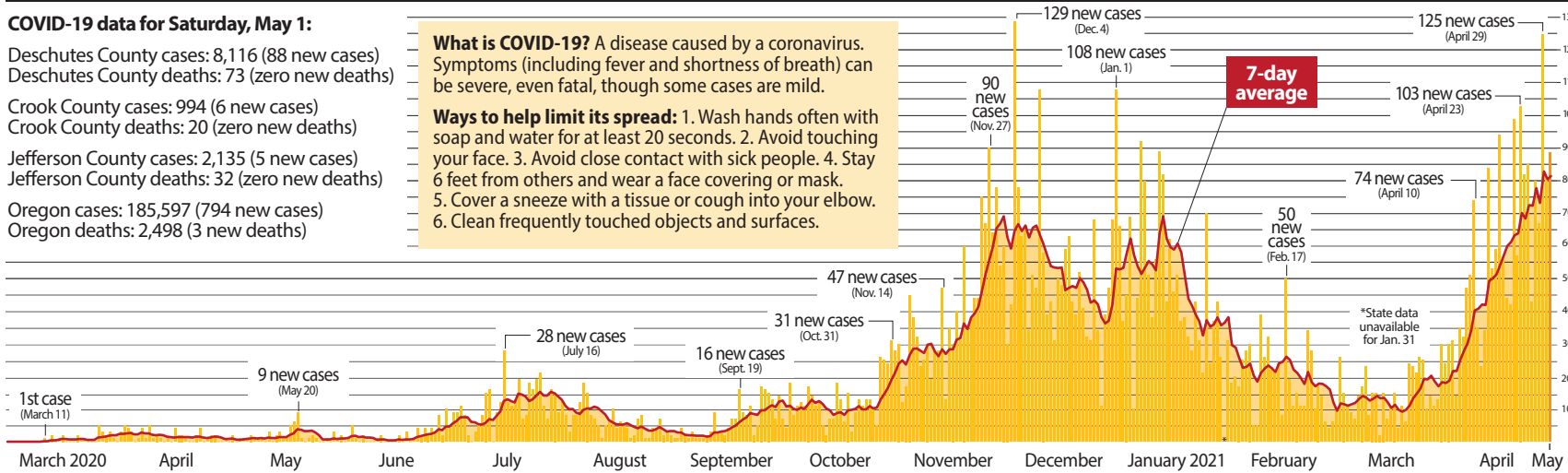
SOURCES: OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY, DESCHUTES COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES BULLETIN GRAPHIC

**COVID-19 data for Saturday, May 1:**

Deschutes County cases: 8,116 (88 new cases)  
Deschutes County deaths: 73 (zero new deaths)  
Crook County cases: 994 (6 new cases)  
Crook County deaths: 20 (zero new deaths)  
Jefferson County cases: 2,135 (5 new cases)  
Jefferson County deaths: 32 (zero new deaths)  
Oregon cases: 185,597 (794 new cases)  
Oregon deaths: 2,498 (3 new deaths)

**What is COVID-19?** A disease caused by a coronavirus. Symptoms (including fever and shortness of breath) can be severe, even fatal, though some cases are mild.

**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 6 feet from others and wear a face covering or mask. 5. Cover a sneeze with a tissue or cough into your elbow. 6. Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces.



### OREGON STATE CAPITOL

# Rep. Nearman charged for breach

BY ANDREW SELSKY

Associated Press  
SALEM — Prosecutors leveled two criminal charges Friday against a Republican member of the Oregon House of Representatives who let far-right rioters into the state Capitol in December.

Rep. Mike Nearman, R-Independence, was charged with official misconduct in the first degree and criminal trespass in the second degree. Oregon State Police struggled to force the rioters back out of the Capitol, which was closed to the public, on Dec. 21 as lawmakers met in emergency session to deal with economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

Marion County Deputy District Attorney Matthew Kemmy told Nearman's attorney, Jason Short, in a letter Friday his client must appear in court on May 11 or face arrest. Short was out of his office Friday and not available for comment. Nearman did not immediately respond to phone



State Rep. Mike Nearman, R-Independence, chats with fellow representatives on the House floor in 2019. Nearman has been a source of controversy since video emerged showing him allowing far-right demonstrators into the state Capitol.

Kaylee Domzalski/OPB file

According to court records, the misconduct charge alleges Nearman, who is from the town of Independence west of Salem, "did unlawfully and knowingly perform an act ... with intent to obtain a benefit or to harm another."

The charge is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum 364 days in prison and a \$6,250 fine.

The trespass charge accused him of unlawfully letting others into the Capitol. It is a Class C misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum of 30 days in jail and a \$1,250 fine.

Oregon Public Broadcasting was first to report Nearman being charged, later announced by the office of Marion County District Attorney Paige Clarkson.

and email messages seeking comment.

Nearman had been seen on security cameras letting violent protesters into the Oregon Capitol. They attacked authorities with bear spray. Outside the building, some of the protesters assaulted reporters and broke glass doors on the marble sheathed Capitol. State police

investigated the case.

In January, after Nearman's role became clear from the security footage, House Speaker Tina Kotek called for his resignation and stripped him of his committee assignments.

"Rep. Nearman put every person in the Capitol in serious danger," Kotek said on Jan. 11. She referred to the deadly

storming of the U.S. Capitol that had occurred just days before, on Jan. 6, by supporters of then President Donald Trump. "As we tragically saw last week during the insurrection at the United States Capitol, the consequences (here) could have been much worse had law enforcement not stepped in so quickly," Kotek said.

## Willamette Valley faces resurgence of crop-destroying gray-tailed voles

BY SIERRA DAWN MCCLAIN

Capital Press  
A massive population spike of gray-tailed voles is wreaking havoc on Willamette Valley cropland for a second straight year.

Vole populations peak in cycles, researchers say. The last big population boom in the valley was about a decade ago. Gray-tailed vole numbers surged again in 2020, and pressure is building into 2021.

"(2020) was the most extreme year we've seen in recent history," said Nicole Anderson, associate professor and field crops extension agronomist at Oregon State University.

Anderson expects more serious crop damage in 2021.

Voles feed on roots, grasses and other living plant material. They burrow underground and sometimes pull grass stems into their holes.

Voles last year damaged grass seed, hazelnut, blueberry, clover and nursery tree crops.

Bryan Ostlund, who represents blueberry, clover, grass seed and other commissions, said the grass seed industry was hit hardest.

Industry leaders estimate voles destroyed 10% to 30% of 2020's crop. This amounts to a "very conservative" estimate of \$50 million lost, said Roger Beyer, executive director of the Oregon Seed Council.

Many fields took a 75% to 80% loss.

"It was heartbreaking," said Steve Salisbury, director of research and regulatory programs at the Oregon Seed Council.

One grass seed grower, Becky Berger of Berger International, lost about \$400,000 in yields. In some fields predicted to produce 3,000 pounds, the yield was only 700 pounds.

Berger described the events as "extremely frustrating" and "economically frightening." This spring, she said, she's



Farmers in Oregon's Willamette Valley are battling a growing population of voles.  
University of Idaho

seen a recent uptick in vole activity again.

Voles are targeting other crops, too, including red and white perennial clovers, blueberry bushes and hazelnut trees. Even livestock farmers have noticed pasture infestations.

"It takes a lot of patience to deal with this mess," said Donna Harnsberger, who raises cattle, horses and llamas on a small ranch in Cottage Grove.

Researchers say gray-tailed voles are understudied, so it's not clear why populations tend to surge and then crash. Some theorize harsh winters and pathogens may cause population crashes.



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