

Pandemic trend

Washington state sees increased drug overdose deaths

Associated Press

More people in Washington state died of drug overdoses in 2020 than any year in at least the past decade, with the surge likely driven by the effects of the pandemic, state health officials said.

The spike mirrors national trends. In December the Centers for Disease Control had reported more than 81,000 drug overdose deaths occurred in the U.S. in the 12 months ending in May 2020 — the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in a 12-month period.

“The disruption to daily life due to the COVID-19 pandemic has hit those with substance use disorder hard,” CDC Director Robert Redfield said at the time.

The Seattle Times reported that fatal drug overdoses in Washington state increased more than 30% last year compared to 2019, according to the data from the state Health Department. The increase was more than twice as large as any in the past decade.

Deadly opioid overdoses — from prescription painkillers, fentanyl and other similar substances — increased by nearly 40%, according to the data. That represented more than triple the rate of any other in-

crease in the past decade.

The Washington Department of Health was still analyzing the preliminary data and causes of death in specific cases, and health officials expect the number of overdose deaths to grow even higher.

“It is reasonable to believe the psychological, social and economic impacts of COVID-19 led to an increase in drug use,” said Kristen Maki, a spokesperson for the department.

In 2020 the health department reported 1,649 drug overdose deaths, compared with 1,259 the previous year. Many more people reached out for help with drug or alcohol problems during 2020.

Calls to the Washington Recovery Help Line, a toll-free phone line for people seeking help or treatment for substance abuse, increased more than 90% in 2020 compared to 2019, according to data from the program, which is primarily funded by the state.

Troy Seibert, opioid use disorder manager for the recovery help line, said the disruptions and traumas over the past year — job losses, isolation, illness and death — contributed to the increases.

“Any time we see folks in a state of despair, substance use is going to rise,” Seibert said.

STATE BRIEFING

Rescuers find 71-year-old hiker missing in the Gorge

A 71-year-old man who had been missing in the Columbia River Gorge since Saturday night was found alive Monday, officials said.

One of the volunteer search and rescue crews that began looking for Joe Dean, of Portland, early Monday found him near the trail where he was last heard from, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office said in a tweet.

Around 11 a.m., the sheriff's office said Dean had been brought down from the trail in wheeled basket and reunited with his family. He was being taken to a nearby hospital for evaluation, according to the sheriff's office.

Dean had gone for a hike Saturday on the Rock of Ages trail near Multnomah Falls but texted his wife that night that he had become lost, according to the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office. The trail is not maintained and has been closed since the Eagle Creek Fire. The sheriff's office reported Dean is an experienced hiker but was not prepared to spend the night.

Deputies and 16 search and rescue volunteers responded around 11 p.m. Sunday. More crews showed up Monday morning, and a drone and a plane were used to aid the search.

— Bulletin wire report

COVID-19

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Under the rules, those numbers mean no counties will be put in extreme risk level when the new limits are announced Tuesday and go into effect May 14.

The new numbers show Central Oregon has among the highest levels of infection and rates. Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson counties are well above the 200 infections per 100,000 mark. But because of the statewide metric requirement, they will almost certainly stay in the high-risk level, the second most restrictive.

Deschutes County reported 1,069 COVID-19 cases over the past two weeks, with the cases per 100,000 rising to 542.6. Also up is the positive test rate, which at 9% is seen by health officials as a figure that could lead to future exponential growth of cases.

Crook County reported 546 cases per 100,000, a slight increase. But its test positivity rate fell to 8.6% from 9%. While still high, the rate is trending in the right direction.

Jefferson County also saw its rate per 100,000 rise to 315.3 cases, but its positive test rate fell to 8.5% from 8.9%.

Deschutes County didn't post the worst numbers of Oregon's large counties only because neighboring Klamath County is so much higher than any populous area in the state.

Klamath County actually saw its number drop, but still leads Oregon in cases by a wide margin. The county had 526

cases, with 772.7 per 100,000. The downward trend could be in doubt because of a rising positive infection rate, now at 17.4%

The biggest ongoing impact is in the Portland tri-county area. Multnomah County showed a small drop in cases; cases in Clackamas rose, and Washington County's metrics showed mixed results. But all were above 200 cases per 100,000, the rate that in other circumstances would have them all in the extreme risk level. They will likely remain at high risk level for another two weeks.

Linn County was another large county that showed a continued sharp climb in cases and infection rate. Benton and Polk counties showed smaller upticks.

Large counties showing falling rates of various sizes include Marion and Lane counties. Lincoln county dropped below 100 cases per 100,000.

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Rockets are launched from the Gaza Strip toward Israel on Monday. Jerusalem was a target for the first time in years. Khalil Hamra/AP

Hamas escalates Jerusalem crisis

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The Hamas militant group on Monday launched a rare rocket strike on Jerusalem after hundreds of Palestinians were hurt in clashes with Israeli police at an iconic mosque, as tensions in the holy city pushed the region closer to full-fledged war.

Israel responded with airstrikes across the Gaza Strip, where 20 people, including nine children, were killed in fighting. More than 700 Palestinians were hurt in clashes with Israeli security forces in Jerusalem and across the West Bank, including nearly 500 who were treated at hospitals.

It was a long day of anger and deadly violence that laid bare Jerusalem's deep divisions, even as Israel tried to celebrate its capture of the city's eastern sector and its sensitive holy sites more than half a century ago. With dozens of rockets flying into Israel throughout the night, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with top security officials



Mahmoud Illean/AP

Palestinians clash with Israeli security forces at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City on Monday. The mosque is in a hill-top compound that is the third-holiest site in Islam and the holiest in Judaism. Tensions at the site, known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary and to Jews as the Temple Mount, have triggered repeated bouts of violence in the past.

and warned that the fighting could drag on, despite calls for calm from the U.S., Europe and elsewhere.

“The terrorist organizations in Gaza have crossed a red line and attacked us with missiles in the outskirts of Jerusalem,” Netanyahu said. “Whoever attacks us will pay a heavy

price,” he said, warning that the fighting could “continue for some time.”

By late Monday, the military had carried out dozens of airstrikes across Gaza, targeting what it said were Hamas military installations and operatives. It said a Hamas tunnel, rocket launchers and at least

eight militants had been hit.

Gaza health officials gave no further breakdowns on the casualties. At least 13 of the 20 deaths in Gaza were attributed to the airstrikes. Seven of the deaths were members of a single family, including three children, who died in a mysterious explosion in the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun. It was not clear if the blast was caused by an Israeli airstrike or errant rocket.

Shortly before midnight, the Israeli army said at least 150 rockets had been fired into Israel. That included a barrage of six rockets that targeted Jerusalem, some 60 miles away. It set off air raid sirens throughout Jerusalem, and explosions could be heard in what was believed to be the first time the city had been targeted since a 2014 war.

In a statement issued early Tuesday, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh said the rocket attacks would continue until Israel stops “all scenes of terrorism and aggression in Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa mosque.”

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DEATH NOTICES
John W. Bancroft Jr. of Bend, OR
July 8, 1933 - May 3, 2021
Arrangements: Baird Funeral Home of Bend is honored to serve the Bancroft family. Please visit our website, www.bairdfh.com, to share condolences and sign our online guest book. 541.382.0903
Services: Family Service planned at a later date.
OBITUARY DEADLINE
Call to ask about our deadlines 541-385-5809
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Email: obits@bendbulletin.com

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*All participants who attend an estimated 60-90-minute in-home product consultation will receive a \$50 Visa gift card. Retail value is \$50. Offer sponsored by LeafGuard Holdings Inc. Limit one per household. Company procures, sells, and installs seamless gutter protection. This offer is valid for homeowners over 18 years of age. If married or involved with a life partner, both cohabitating persons must attend and complete presentation together. Participants must have a photo ID, be able to understand English, and be legally able to enter into a contract. The following persons are not eligible for this offer: employees of Company or affiliated companies or entities, their immediate family members, previous participants in a Company in-home consultation within the past 12 months and all current and former Company customers. Gift may not be extended, transferred, or substituted except that Company may substitute a gift of equal or greater value if it deems it necessary. Gift card will be mailed to the participant via first class United States Mail within 10 days of receipt of the promotion form. Not valid in conjunction with any other promotion or discount of any kind. Offer not sponsored by Visa and is subject to change without notice prior to reservation. Expires 05/31/2021. **New orders only. Offer sponsored by LeafGuard Holdings, Inc. Limit one per household. Company procures, sells, and installs seamless gutter protection. This offer is valid for homeowners over 18 years of age. The following persons are not eligible for this offer: employees of Company or affiliated companies or entities, their immediate family members, and all current and former LeafGuard customers. Discount may not be extended, transferred, or substituted except that Company may substitute an item of equal or greater value if it deems it necessary. Discount will be received after completion of the installation and payment in full. Not valid in conjunction with any other promotion or discount of any kind. Offer is subject to change without notice prior to reservation. Expires 05/31/2021. LeafGuard operates as LeafGuard of Oregon in Oregon under license number 223377.