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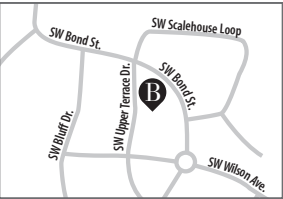
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LOCAL, STATE & REGION

Heat wave forecast extended

Temps expected to reach 101-102 in Bend through Saturday

BY CLAIRE RUSH
Associated Press/Report for America

The scorching heat spell in the Pacific Northwest is now expected to last longer than forecasters had initially predicted, setting parts of the normally temperate region on course to break heat wave duration records.

As temperatures hit a daily record 102 degrees Fahrenheit in Portland on Tuesday, the National Weather Service extended the excessive heat warning for the city from Thursday through Saturday evening. The same warning was also extended in Central Oregon until 11 p.m. Saturday.

“For the next several days through Saturday we’re going to be within a few degrees of 100 every day,” said Colby Neuman, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Portland. Temperatures are forecast to soar to 101 again on Friday.

The agency’s forecast predicts high temperatures of 101-102 degrees through Saturday. Temperatures had reached 102 at Bend Municipal Airport as of 4:15 p.m. Wednesday, according to preliminary data from the weather service. They hit the same temperature on Tuesday, the data shows.



Beth Nakamura/The Oregonian
Judy and Merlyn Webber sit out in front of their home at Mobile Estates in Portland on Tuesday. Merlyn Webber said he misplaced the tools to fix his fan.

The duration of the heat wave puts Portland “in the running” for tying its longest streak of six consecutive days of 95 degrees or higher, Neuman said.

Climate change is fueling longer heat waves in the Pacific Northwest, a region where week-long heat spells were historically rare, according to climate experts.

Elsewhere, Seattle on Tuesday also reported a new record daily high of 94 Fahrenheit. The heat spell was forecast to last into Saturday in Western Washington as well.

Multnomah County, which includes Portland, said there has been an uptick in the number of people calling emergency services numbers and visiting emergency

departments for heat-related symptoms.

“Emergency medical services responded to 361 calls Tuesday, about 25% higher than a typical summer day,” Multnomah County said in a statement, adding that “13 of those were heat-related.”

Emergency department visits “have remained elevated since Sunday,” the statement said. “In the past three days, hospitals have treated 13 people for heat illness, when they would normally expect to see two or three.”

People working or exercising outside, along with older people, were among those taken to emergency departments, the statement added.

Threats lead state to nix fire risk meetings

BY DAVID SMIGELSKI
Mail Tribune (Medford)

Threats of violence prompted state officials Tuesday to cancel a public meeting in Grants Pass addressing Oregon’s new fire risk map while the meeting scheduled in Medford moved online.

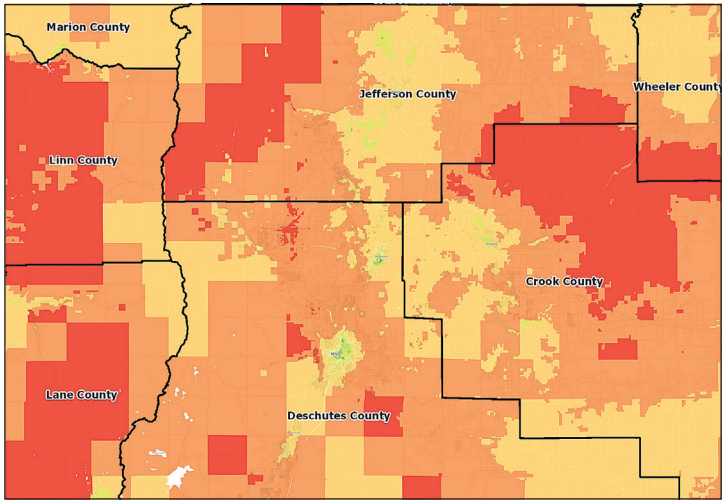
“Shortly after we announced the meetings, there was a phone message in Grants Pass threatening violence,” said Derek Gasperini, public affairs officer for the Oregon Department of Forestry. “The police looked into it and considered it concerning, so we decided to cancel the meeting out of an abundance of caution.”

Gasperini declined to provide specifics about the type of violence that was threatened, based on advice from law enforcement.

“Because people involved in the meetings are members of the community, we have been asked to be vague about the details of the threat,” he said. “But we understand the public’s need for information, so we intend to return to the community as soon as we can.”

The fire map, and meetings about it, were spurred by Senate Bill 762, which was passed in the wake of the deadly fires in 2020.

The searchable map shows the wildfire risk of properties across the state. Anyone can plug in an address and see where the property falls on a risk spectrum. The map is a collaboration that involved ODF, the U.S. Forest Service and Oregon State University as part of SB 762. That bill, passed during the 2021 legislative session, ordered state agencies to under-



State of Oregon/Oregon Explorer
This view of the state’s new map broadly shows the wildfire risk for all of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties. The state breaks down the risk levels into five categories: Dark green: no risk. Light green: low risk. Yellow: moderate risk. Orange: high risk. Red: extreme risk.

Local map meeting

The Oregon Department of Forestry has planned information sessions around the state to explain the state’s new wildfire risk map. A meeting in Central Oregon is scheduled for 7-8 p.m. Aug. 10 at the Deschutes County fairgrounds, 3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond.

take a slate of proactive measures to prevent and respond to the growing threat of wildfires.

State officials knew the new fire maps, along with new building codes and other measures that may be required of property owners in fire-prone areas, would be

controversial, but they didn’t expect to be physically threatened.

Despite threats, Gasperini said, ODF plans to reschedule the in-person meetings in southwest Oregon, possibly the week after next.

Property owners in the high and extreme risk areas of the new fire map have received written notice from ODF indicating their property’s risk class and whether it’s in the wildland-urban interface.

The notices say they may be subject to future defensible space or building code requirements and how to find information about those requirements.

For more information, visit the Oregon Department of Forestry’s wildfire risk webpage, <https://tinyurl.com/bdvemrt>

LOCAL & STATE BRIEFING

Power cord sparks fire in northeast Bend

Bend Fire & Rescue responded to a garage fire Tuesday afternoon on NE Seward Avenue apparently sparked by a power cord.

After an electrical malfunction, the homeowners found their garage full of smoke and called 911, the fire department said in a news release Tuesday. Firefighters put out the blaze, which had spread to the attic, soon after arriving at the house.

Upon investigation, firefighters found the fire was started because of a power cord leading from a camper parked next to the house. The homeowners were using the camper’s air conditioning to keep cool, and it was determined the cord to power the camper had failed in the garage and started the fire, the release said.

The cord used was too small to handle the power coming from the air conditioner in the camper. However, it is unknown if the cord failed because of the power draw or if it had been damaged prior, the release added.

The fire department reminded the public to make sure extension cords are used properly. Ensure the size and amperage limits of the cord match the usage, and that the cord is not pinched, trapped or damaged in any way, as this damage can lead to a fire or short.

Only use one cord between the appliance and the outlet to reduce the chance of failure, the fire department added.

Volunteers sought for water sampling in Whychus Creek next month

The Upper Deschutes Watershed Council is organizing two days of water sampling on Whychus Creek to improve its data on benthic macroinvertebrates. Collection will take place 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 11-12, and volunteers are welcome.

The collection of insects including mayflies and stoneflies will help researchers better understand the health of Whychus Creek. The information gathered may assist in the reintroduction of steelhead and salmon.

Volunteers interested in joining the water sampling effort can do so by visiting the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council website (upperdeschuteswatershedcouncil.org). Volunteers are advised to come prepared with a hat and sun protection, a water bottle and snacks.

Questions about the water sampling project can be directed to Lauren Mork: lmork@restorethedeschutes.org.

The Upper Deschutes Watershed Council is also hosting a cleanup of the Deschutes River at six locations on Saturday. Volunteer positions have filled up at five of the locations, but as of Wednesday space was still available to join the effort at La Pine State Park. Registration is also through eventbrite.com. Type Deschutes River Cleanup in the search box.

COVID hospitalizations fall in Oregon

Hospitals have reported the largest sustained decline in coronavirus hospitalizations since March, with 64 fewer patients occupying hospital beds Wednesday than when the current surge peaked 10 days ago at 464 hospitalizations.

Hospital space remains in short supply, however, with only 8% of intensive care units available for patients statewide and 7% of regular hospital beds available.

Health officials warned Oregonians last week that the hospital system is again facing a crisis, even though COVID-19 hospitalizations amount to less than half of what they were during the delta and omicron surge peaks. The strain on hospitals is driven at least in part by delays in getting people out of hospitals, staff burnout and patients coming in for issues they had left untreated during the worst of the pandemic.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has ranked 19 Oregon counties, including Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson, at high levels of community spread. The CDC generally updates levels on Thursdays. At high levels, health officials recommend that everyone wear masks when in indoor public places.

Since it began: Oregon has reported 848,046 confirmed or presumed infections and 8,061 deaths.

— Bulletin staff and wire reports

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