

Grant County reports 85th COVID-19 case

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Nineteen more people in John Day, Canyon City, Mt. Vernon and Seneca tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total number of cases in the county to 85, according to a Tuesday press release from the Grant County Health Department.

The new cases come after Gov. Kate Brown announced Friday a statewide "Two-Week Freeze" starting today to slow rising COVID-19 infection rates.

In Oregon, state health officials reported 935 new confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases and 13 new deaths Tuesday.

The state's surge in cases mirrors the trend across the country, as positive cases topped 11 million and the number of deaths hit 247,000, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Hospitals run the risk of being stretched beyond capacity if infection rates do not decrease.

In Grant County's region seven, shared with Deschutes, Harney, Klamath, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake and Wheeler counties, the Oregon Health Authority reports that 18 people are being hospitalized for COVID-19.



Eagle file photo
Jessica Winegar, Grant County Health Department clinic manager, prepares a COVID-19 test kit Nov. 5 during the county's curbside testing.

Region seven, as of Tuesday, has 16 staffed adult intensive care unit beds and 108 non-ICU beds are available, according to OHA's website.

OHA notes the data does not reflect the maximum capacity of the hospitals. Beds, equipment and other resources can be repurposed if additional patients need to be hospitalized.

Blue Mountain Hospital's Director of Emergency Medical Services Rebekah Rand said the hospital is continuing to allow for elective surgeries. She said the procedures in John Day are typically routine and do not require an

extended inpatient stay.

She said the hospital requires that patients have a negative COVID-19 test before the procedure. She said the hospital is closely watching its testing capacity, personal protective equipment and staffing levels. Earlier in the pandemic, she said, the governor halted the surgeries to preserve PPE.

"At this time, our PPE level on hand remains at a level we are comfortable with," she said. "And our supply chains remain open in that we are still able to place orders and receive them in a timely manner."

Blue Mountain Hospital District's Home Health, Hospice, and Outpatient Clinic has eliminated most in-person visits and will see patients through telehealth or phone call support until Nov. 30, at which time they will evaluate the COVID-19 infection rate, according to a Nov. 30 press release.

Grant County Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay said the county is experiencing community spread, where people contract the virus without any known contact with a sick person.

"I don't know that we're ever going to get down to having zero to one cases a week anytime soon," Lindsay said. "But what we want to

see is a decrease from week to week.

"You have exposures, you have incubation time, you have symptom development time and viral load time. (The increase in cases) is not surprising, and I'm hopeful that our case count this week will be lower than last week."

She said that she is asking people to continue to be safe and thoughtful about what they're doing and how they're doing it.

Lindsay said the COVID-19 Risk Assessment Planning Tool, a tool designed by researchers at Georgia Tech University, helps people easily understand the risks associated with different size gatherings.

For example, in Grant County, as of Nov. 16, some would have a 48% chance that they would encounter at least one person infected with the coronavirus at a Thanksgiving dinner with 25 guests. In Harney County, it's 27%.

The tool considers the number of infections per capita in a county and the size of the event. The information plotted over a county-level map makes it easier to understand, Lindsay said.

The map is updated daily with real-time information on new cases from every county across the country: <https://covid19risk.biosci.gatech.edu>.

Officials lack evidence to pursue threat

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Officials lack evidence to investigate a reported threat in Prairie City.

Ashley Stevick told the Eagle she heard from a parent of a student at Prairie City School that other students had threatened to "kill liberals" should President Donald Trump lose the election.

Prairie City School Superintendent Casey Hallgath said he received a call last week regarding the allegations and claims of bullying at the school.

"We don't tolerate that, so if somebody makes a threat like that we instantly take the individual and talk to them with our counselor," Hallgath said. "Then we would contact the parents, but (the source) didn't say who the parents were and wouldn't give me any information."

Hallgath said, without the information or names, the school would not be able to do much to address the allegations. Another person called him to report the same information but also withheld details from Hallgath that could be used to address the allegations.

"Go tell the parents to call me, and we'll figure this out," Hallgath said.

Both individuals said they

felt threatened. Hallgath said, if that is the case, they need to immediately call law enforcement or dispatch and let them know. The Grant County Sheriff's office can be reached at 541-575-1131.

Sheriff Glenn Palmer has not responded to calls from the Eagle regarding the allegation.

John Day Police Chief Mike Durr said the department has not received a report of that happening in John Day but said, if the allegations were true, then it's unacceptable.

"If that's true, I just hope it's somebody just venting, but that is definitely something that is unacceptable," Durr said. "If we get a report of somebody doing that in John Day we're definitely going to investigate it."

Durr said that if threats are made to call the police department at 541-575-0030 or dispatch at 541-575-0195.

Stevick said there was also a list of people circulating online falsely accusing them of reporting local businesses for not complying with Gov. Kate Brown's mask mandate.

Given the heightened political climate surrounding both the election and COVID-19, a list falsely accusing people for reporting businesses that have taken financial hits due to the coronavirus is dangerous, she said.

COPS AND COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

Grant County Circuit Court

Two counts of harassment against Shiloh S. Stinnett, allegedly committed on Aug. 12, were dismissed on Nov. 12 based on a motion by the state in the interests of justice.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of Nov. 11:

Concealed handgun licenses: 13

Average inmates: 15
Bookings: 0
Releases: 2
Arrests: 0
Citations: 2
Fingerprints: 2
Civil papers: 12
Warrants processed: 1
Assistance/Welfare check: 2
Search and Rescue: 1
Artur Zacarias, 41, Bend, was cited for violation of basic rule, 88/55 zone.
Gage Immoos, 29, Prairie City, was cited for driving uninsured.

Grant County Justice Court

Violation of basic rule: Luis Omar Cruz Aguilar, 28, Bend, May 14, 75/55 zone, fined \$165; William M. Pasiechnik, 37, Prineville, Sept. 22, 72/55 zone, fined \$165; Lan Marberry, 40, Salem, Oct. 14, 78/55 zone, fined \$265; David P. Billar, 41, Dayville, Oct. 1, 69/55 zone, fined \$165.

Driving while suspended:

Jeffery C. Cook, 24, La Grande, April 29, fined \$440; Adrian Couey, 35, John Day, June 9, fined \$440, Sept. 11, fined \$440, Sept. 17, fined \$440; William J. Collier Jr., 27, John Day, March 29, fined \$440.

Driving uninsured: Adrian Couey, 35, John Day, June 9, fined \$265, Sept. 11, fined \$265; Patricia K. Culver, 63, Mt. Vernon, April 20, fined \$265; Jeffrey C. Cook, 24, La Grande, April 29, fined \$265.

Joseph A. Krotzer of Clatskanie was convicted of hunting on enclosed lands. He was ordered to pay \$465 in fees and fines.

Olivia L. Krotzer of Rainier was convicted of hunting on enclosed lands. She was ordered to pay a \$440 fine.

Justin J. Levi Krotzer of Rainier was convicted of hunting on enclosed lands. He was ordered to pay \$465 in fees and fines.

Oregon State Police

Nov. 8: Oregon State Police responded to a noninjury, blocking semi crash on Highway 395C near milepost 13 in Grant County. When OSP arrived, the semi was on its wheels blocking the southbound lane. Due to the road conditions, the semi wasn't able to move on its own. The semi had minor damage to the driver's side of the cab. The vehicle that hit the semi was no longer on scene. Both parties exchanged information. Oregon Department of Transportation was on scene graveling the highway and helped move the semi to a turn out.

Nov. 9: OSP responded to a reported single-vehicle crash at milepost 198 on Highway 26. Investigation revealed the vehi-

cle was eastbound at a stated 50 mph, negotiating a curve, when it lost traction on packed snow. The vehicle started to slide, and the driver was unable to recover. The vehicle rotated 180 degrees and entered a ditch off the east-bound shoulder, striking a hill where it came to an uncontrolled rest. The driver and his juvenile passenger were not injured. The vehicle sustained minor damage. The vehicle was towed from the scene by Frontier Towing.

Nov. 10: OSP stopped a known suspended driver at Southwest Brent Street near West Main Street in John Day. The driver, Steven M. Warrington, 31, of Granite is a chronic suspended and uninsured driver. Warrington has been cited by the John Day Police Department and OSP numerous times for driving while suspended violations and driving uninsured and OSP has previously impounded vehicles driven by Warrington. Warrington did not have insurance on the vehicle he was currently driving. OSP issued Warrington citations for driving while suspended and uninsured. Doug's Motor Vehicle Repair responded and impounded the vehicle.

Nov. 11: OSP responded to an injury, single-vehicle crash near milepost 108 on Highway

395B. The vehicle was southbound on icy roads at an estimated 40 mph when it started to slide. The driver, a 76-year-old man, tried to correct the slide, but was unable. The vehicle rotated to the left, crossed the northbound lane of travel, entered a ditch and then struck a hillside. The vehicle rolled onto the driver's side and came to a rest, blocking the northbound lane of travel. The driver was transported via ambulance to Blue Mountain Hospital with apparent minor injuries. The two passengers in the vehicle were not injured. At the request of the driver, Doug's Motor Vehicle Repair responded and removed the vehicle.

Nov. 12: A ranch near Kimberly reported locating a hunter who had trespassed across their land to recover a bull elk. The suspect remained on scene with ranch personnel until a Fish and Wildlife trooper responded. The suspect, Michael J. Milner, 49, of Kerby was ultimately issued a criminal citation for second-degree criminal trespass. The ranch manager allowed the suspect and his party to finish recovering the bull elk.

Nov. 14: OSP responded to a reported single-vehicle crash at milepost 96 on Highway 395B.

Investigation revealed the vehicle was headed southbound and negotiated a curve when it lost traction on packed snow and ice. The vehicle started to slide, and the driver was unable to recover. The vehicle left the roadway on the northbound side of the road into a ditch and started to roll, coming to an uncontrolled rest in the ditch on its wheels. The driver was transported to Blue Mountain Hospital. The driver received minor injuries. The vehicle was towed from the scene by Frontier Towing.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 132 calls during the week of Nov. 9-15, including:

John Day Police Department

Nov. 11: Received a report of a vehicle with an infant riding on the passenger's lap in the front near Apple Road.

Nov. 13: Along with GCSO and OSP, responded to shots fired on Southeast Second Avenue.

Nov. 13: Along with GCSO and OSP, responded to shots fired on South Bailey Place.

Oregon State Police

Nov. 9: Advised of a rollover, noninjury crash on Highway 26 near milepost 198.

Nov. 10: Received a report of

a noninjury crash on Highway 26.

Nov. 12: Received a report of a noninjury crash involving a vehicle hitting a deer on Highway 26 near milepost 163.

Grant County Sheriff's Office

Nov. 9: Received a report of theft on Maple Street.

Nov. 10: Received a report of a noninjury crash on County Road 21.

Nov. 11: Received a report of a noninjury crash on Forest Road 10.

Nov. 13: Received a report of theft on North Humbolt Street.

John Day ambulance

Nov. 9: Responded for a 75-year-old woman with elevated blood sugar on Valley View Drive.

Nov. 10: Paged for an 82-year-old woman suffering from weakness and spasms on East Main Street.

Nov. 11: Paged for a man with possibly broken ribs on East Main Street.

Nov. 13: Responded for an elderly patient with severe back and leg pain on West Riverside Street.

Nov. 14: Dispatched to Canyon City for an 85-year-old woman with difficulty breathing on North Clark Street.

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