

County coronavirus infections reach 751

The Columbia Press

Clatsop County Public Health Department reported 13 new cases of coronavirus in the past week ending Wednesday. Two of them have been hospitalized.

The new cases bring the county's total to 751 since the pandemic began; there have been 18 hospitalizations and five deaths. The rest are recuperating at home or have recovered.

Statewide, there had been 144,605 as of Wednesday with 1,991 deaths.

FREE WEEKLY TESTS

Oregon Health and Science University is offering free COVID-19 tests in Astoria.

OHSU's Community Outreach Testing program will set up from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Monday at the Clatsop County Household Hazardous Waste facility, 1780 Williamsport Road.

Testing will be open to people 2 months and older.

Register online at ohsu.edu/COVIDVans or call 503-494-4911.

The county Public Health Department offers tests there on Tuesdays and Fridays.

As of Wednesday, 2,626 Clatsop County residents had

been fully vaccinated or had received the first of two doses. Statewide, 471,966 people had received first or both doses.

INSURANCE COMPANIES

The state now requires health benefit plans to cover the costs of COVID-19 vaccination, following an order by state Public Health Director Rachael Banks.

The Jan. 27 determination cites Oregon Revised Statute 743A.264 in mandating that private health plans operating in Oregon not charge patients for most costs related to providing the vaccine. That includes the cost of all doses and associated supplies, and expenses for administering the shot, such as those related to staff time.

The Oregon Health Plan and Medicare programs do not charge patients for these costs.

"We are in the midst of a devastating pandemic that has affected more than 142,000 people in Oregon and claimed almost 2,000 lives," Banks said. "There should be no financial barrier to getting the vaccine, whether it's a copay or administrative fee."

To learn more, contact your insurance company, Oregon Health Authority at 800-273-

0557, or Medicare at 800-633-4227.

RESTAURANT FINED

A Springfield restaurant was fined more than \$9,000 for failing to protect its workers and customers from coronavirus.

Along Came Trudy willfully continued to expose workers to the virus despite a public health order limiting the capacity for indoor dining to zero in an "extreme risk" county.

The fine was the result of an inspection launched in response to multiple complaints about the eatery. An inspection was completed and the citation was issued despite attempts to thwart the process, including armed people standing outside the business who threatened regulatory agencies and their staff members.

In allowing indoor dining, the restaurant chose to disregard capacity limitations imposed by the Oregon Health Authority and failed to ensure customers inside the establishment wore a mask when not eating.

Owner Trudy Logan told authorities she was aware of the prohibition, but willingly chose to continue.

Election: Special district seats to open countywide

Continued from Page 1

held by James Campbell in Position 1, Dirk Rohne in Position 2, and Frank Spence in Position 5.

The Clatsop Community College Board of Directors will have four of the seven seats open for election. They are the seats held by Robert Duehmig, Sara Meyer, Rosemary Baker-Monaghan, and Dave Zunkel.

Sunset Empire Transportation District's Board of Directors will have four open slots – those held by Diana Nino, Rebecca Read, Charles

Withers, and Pamela Alegria.

The Astoria School Board will have three open positions, those held by Grace Laman, Jeanette Sampson, and Jenna Rickenbach.

To run for public office, visit the Clatsop County Elections website and fill out a candidate filing form. It must be returned by 5 p.m. March 18.

Other open positions include:

Clatsop Care Center Health District, four positions

Clatsop County Rural Law Enforcement, two positions

Gearhart Rural Fire Protection District, four positions

Knappa School District, three positions

Miles Crossing Sanitary Sewer District, three positions

Seaside School District, four positions

Shoreline Sanitary District, two positions

Union Health District, four positions

Warrenton Rural Fire Protection District, three positions

Youngs River Lewis & Clark Water District, three seats



Crater Lake

Two lakes named state resources

Crater Lake in Southern Oregon and Waldo Lake in the Willamette National Forest have been named Outstanding Resource Waters by the state Environmental Quality Commission.

The commission, which oversees the Department of Environmental Quality, voted 4-0 on Jan. 21 to approve the designation, which gives them additional state protections.

It's only the second time the commission has granted the special status to waters in Oregon. The remote North Fork

Smith River in Southwest Oregon received the designation in 2017.

Discharge into the lakes is prohibited, except for short-term stormwater permits for construction. Existing recreation and tourism activities will continue at both lakes.

While most lakes in the United States have visibility of less than 30 feet, Waldo Lake and Crater Lake have an average visibility of more than 100 feet.

Additionally, both lakes are treasured recreation and tourism hotspots.

Good journalism matters. Now more than ever.

Stay smart.
Read the paper

A 1-year subscription by mail is just \$26 by mail to Clatsop County residents

A 1-year subscription to addresses outside Clatsop County by mail is just \$35.

A 1-year online subscription is just \$22!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

In-County Out-of-County Online Subscription

THE COLUMBIA PRESS

Clatsop County's Independent Weekly Newspaper

Send payment to: 5 N. Hwy. 101, #500, Warrenton, OR 97146
or pay online at <https://thecolumbiapress.com/?m=subscribe>