

Driver shortage could require bus route cuts

Sunset Empire Transportation District could be making some significant service cuts due to a severe shortage of drivers.

Executive Director Jeff Hazen, who posted the announcement Wednesday on the district's Facebook page, said he'll recommend cuts to the Board of Commissioners when they meet Aug. 26.

"The driver shortages are not unique to SETD," he wrote. "This shortage is affecting

transportation providers in all sectors across the nation."

The following routes are proposed for suspension effective Sept. 6:

- Route 17, Cannon Beach weekdays
- Route 21, Cannon Beach weekends
- Route 13, Astoria weekends
- Route 16, Warrenton weekends
- Seaside Streetcar, weekends



- Route 15 in Warrenton is proposed to be cut back on weekdays to just 5:50 to 9:03 a.m. and from 5:30 to 8:43 p.m.

- Route 101 will be cut from four buses per day to two, with arrival frequency about

every hour.

In addition, each route will be shut down for an hour during each shift for the driver's lunch break.

Employers are encouraged to contact Transportation Options Specialist Kathy Kleczek at 503-861-5360 or kathy@ridethebus.org to assist with alternatives for their employees.

Members of the public are urged to contact Hazen at jeff@ridethebus.org by 5 p.m. Aug. 25 if they want to comment.

Boosters recommended for some by CDC

A booster of the COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems.

The recommendation was announced Aug. 13 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup.

"This official CDC recommendation — which follows FDA's decision to amend the emergency use authorizations of the vaccines — is an important step in ensuring everyone, including those most vulnerable to COVID-19, can get as much protection as possible from COVID-19 vaccination," CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky said.

Meanwhile, cases throughout the country have been rising at an alarming rate, largely because 50 percent of the population remain unvaccinated and the more contagious Delta variant is now the dominant strain.

Clatsop County Public Health has reported 248 cases with 24 hospitalizations during the past seven days ending Wednesday, which brings the county's total case

count to 1,605. There have been 11 deaths locally since the pandemic began.

As of Aug. 13, 22,769 people had been vaccinated here in Clatsop County.

Statewide, 11 new deaths were reported Wednesday, raising the death toll to 2,975.

Oregon Health Authority also reported 2,139 new confirmed and presumptive cases, bringing the state total to 247,866.

Oregon Health Authority reported an outbreak of cases at Clatsop Care Health & Rehabilitation.

The four cases were reported Aug. 7, three of them staff

members and one a resident.

Clatsop County has had more than a dozen recent outbreaks, the county's public health director told county commissioners Aug. 11.

"It's a lot for Clatsop County, but it's not unique to Clatsop County," Margo Lalich said. There have been outbreaks in congregant living settings, including long-term care facilities.

Members of North Coast Family Fellowship in Seaside received emails this week saying several staff members, including lead pastor John Nagle, had contracted COVID-19.

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