

LOCAL WEATHER

Hermiston officials plan to renew state zone designation intended to attract employers

BY SEAN HART
HERMISTON HERALD



Morgan

The Hermiston Enterprise Zone designation is set to expire this year, but city officials hope to renew the state program that aims to attract new employers through temporary property tax abatement.

Hermiston Assistant City Manager and zone manager Mark Morgan said the economic development program expires June 30, but he is hopeful the HEZ will be renewed for another 10-year term. A public meeting about the zone and renewal process will take place at 3 p.m. Friday at the Hermiston Conference Center.

"Ultimately, what the enterprise zone exists to do is to incentivize manufacturing employers, largely, into an area," Morgan said. "The intention of the program is to attract these employers to the area so that once that exemption expires, you not only have these jobs

in the area, you theoretically have a large investment in the area that will pay property taxes."

Morgan said the basic exemption from property taxes, such as those levied by cities, counties, ports and school districts, lasts for three years for qualifying projects, but if an employer creates new jobs with an average wage at least 150 percent of the Umatilla County average wage, approximately \$53,000, the exemption can be extended up to five years.

From 2004 to 2013, Morgan said qualifying projects in the HEZ accounted for 243 new jobs, an annual payroll of \$7.2 million and \$79.5 million in new investment. He said the zone includes all the property within the city limits and also the Shearer's Snacks property. The totals through 2013 do not include an-

other \$3.5 million expansion at Shearer's last year, which added about 35 additional jobs. Morgan said Shearer's and DuPont Pioneer have utilized the program for three different expansions each.

Morgan said some people may think it would be better to require these businesses to pay the property taxes without the temporary exemption, but there is no guarantee the businesses would have expanded locally without the exemptions.

This year, Morgan said a five-year exemption on a \$35 million expansion at DuPont Pioneer will expire, and the property value will be added to the city's tax roll. He said the assessed value would be different than the project cost, but the amount collected by the city will be significant. As a rough estimate, he said a \$30 million increase in property values would lead to \$180,000 in new general fund revenue for the city of Hermiston each year.

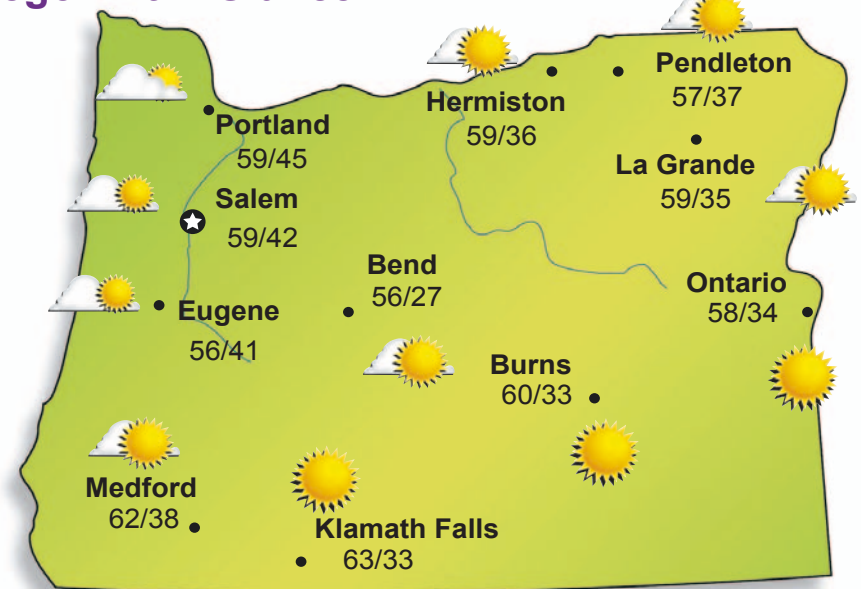
Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast

Wed 2/18	Thu 2/19	Fri 2/20	Sat 2/21	Sun 2/22
59/36	57/37	56/34	54/30	50/27
Except for a few afternoon clouds, mainly sunny. High 59F.	Mix of sun and clouds. Highs in the upper 50s and lows in the upper 30s.	Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s and lows in the mid 30s.	Sunny. Highs in the mid 50s and lows in the low 30s.	Mainly sunny. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the upper 20s.
Sunrise 6:54 AM Sunset 5:28 PM	Sunrise 6:53 AM Sunset 5:29 PM	Sunrise 6:51 AM Sunset 5:30 PM	Sunrise 6:49 AM Sunset 5:32 PM	Sunrise 6:48 AM Sunset 5:33 PM

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Oregon At A Glance



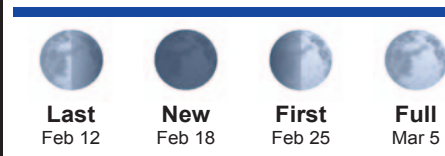
Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Albany	58	43	cloudy	Florence	56	45	cloudy	Newport	55	46	cloudy
Ashland	64	38	mst sunny	Grants Pass	62	39	mst sunny	Pendleton	57	37	mst sunny
Astoria	55	45	cloudy	Hermiston	59	36	mst sunny	Portland	59	45	cloudy
Baker City	56	31	mst sunny	John Day	60	36	mst sunny	Redmond	63	30	mst sunny
Bend	56	27	mst sunny	Klamath Falls	63	33	sunny	Roseburg	60	43	pt sunny
Brookings	59	44	pt sunny	La Grande	59	35	mst sunny	Salem	59	42	pt sunny
Burns	60	33	sunny	Lakeview	63	31	sunny	Springfield	58	39	pt sunny
Coos Bay	57	46	pt sunny	Lincoln City	55	48	cloudy	The Dalles	61	41	pt sunny
Corvallis	58	44	pt sunny	McMinnville	58	43	pt sunny	Tillamook	56	46	cloudy
Eugene	56	41	pt sunny	Medford	62	38	mst sunny	Vale	58	36	sunny

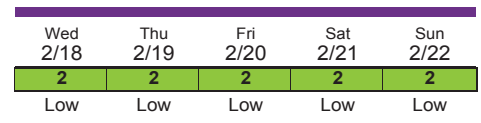
National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	40	10	windy	Houston	66	43	sunny	Phoenix	78	52	sunny
Boston	30	17	cloudy	Los Angeles	73	55	sunny	San Francisco	66	52	pt sunny
Chicago	9	-9	windy	Miami	71	48	rain	Seattle	56	47	cloudy
Dallas	59	32	sunny	Minneapolis	4	-15	pt sunny	St. Louis	13	-2	windy
Denver	50	28	sunny	New York	32	18	cloudy	Washington, DC	36	8	sn shower

Moon Phases



UV Index



The UV Index is measured on a 0-11 number scale, with a higher UV Index showing the need for greater skin protection.

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Corrections

It is the policy of the *Hermiston Herald* to correct errors as soon as they are discovered. Incorrect information will be corrected on Page 2A.

Errors committed on the Opinion page will be corrected on that page. Corrections also are noted in the online versions of our stories.

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