

Good afternoon. You're tuned in to 91.9 FM KPTZ on your FM dial here in Port Townsend Washington. I am Simon Jaynes, bringing you your local news for March 3, 2022.

Traffic on Washington Street is being diverted once again today as the road is closed between Walker and Pierce Streets near the County Courthouse in order to complete construction of two mini roundabouts aimed at slowing vehicle speed on the road. The circular concrete traffic barriers located in the center of Washington Street at its intersections with Benton and Cass are nearing completion. The concrete work is finished and, according to City workers on site this morning, all that remains is to remove gravel from the centers several feet down, replace it with dirt, and plant trees. They plan to have this work done by 3pm tomorrow and that will be the last of the street closures for a while.

The city does still have to install curbs along the right-hand traffic side of each roundabout at the shoulder, in order to keep cars from veering too wide. The concrete cutting and footing-work for these can be accomplished with simple flagging of traffic. But when the time comes to pour the actual curbs, we can expect another 2 to 3 days of detours around the site. The City does not have an exact date set for this work at this time but it will happen within the next two months before peak summer traffic begins.

On January 2, 2022, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declared the flooding in northwestern Washington that occurred in November of 2021 to be a federal disaster and made federal funds available to individuals and families affected by the floods. Residents in Clallam County and certain parts of Jefferson County may be eligible for this FEMA relief and Monday, March 7 is the last day to apply for this aid. The FEMA webpage devoted to this specific disaster (<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4635#help-families>) contains links to several resources. The fastest way to apply for aide is through <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/> or to call 1-800-621-3362.

An insurance claim should be filed as well because FEMA assistance cannot aid with losses already covered under an insurance policy. But applying for federal disaster assistance from FEMA will not affect other federal benefits that Washington disaster survivors may receive. To date, FEMA has received 129 registrations and approved more than \$585,000 in aid for individuals.

Jefferson County Public Health reported 8 new cases of COVID-19 yesterday. This brings our total case count, since the beginning of the pandemic, up to 3,082. There are currently 71 active cases in isolation and 5 Jefferson County residents are hospitalized.

With the case rate dropping and the mask mandate scheduled to be lifted in just over a week, conversations around masking are happening in relation to our many public indoor spaces. None more importantly than in our schools. If you are interested in hearing the most up to date policies and strategies from the Port Townsend School District, there is a “Conversation with The Superintendent” open to the public at 6pm Wednesday March 9. It is entitled, “A masking mandate conversation via Zoom with Dr. Linda Rosenbury.” The Zoom link can be found here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7733002806>.

The first School Board meeting of the month also happens tonight at 5:30pm. The first meetings of the month are Work Study meetings where topics of interest to the public are researched. The Zoom link for this meeting

is posted on the district website (<https://www.ptschools.org/> > Next meeting). The agenda is at <https://go.boarddocs.com/wa/ptsd/Board.nsf/Public>.

The Washington State Department of Corrections issued a statement yesterday that “Prisons and Work Release facilities are seeing a promising decline in COVID-19 impacts with 5 currently on outbreak status. [By comparison] there were 20 on outbreak status on January 24, 2022.” In light of those numbers, many corrections facilities across the state have seen in-person visitation reinstated for the first time since January of 2021. These facilities include Olympic Corrections Center in Jefferson County, Clallam Bay Corrections Center, and Cedar Creek Corrections Center.

And that's it for today's local news. KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. I'm Simon Jaynes. Thanks for listening and have a great day.