

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM. I'm Jim Burke, with local news and commentary for Tuesday, February 7, 2023.

The Jefferson County Public Utility District is having a planned power outage from 9am to 5pm today, Tuesday, February 7. It is expected to impact 1,971 customers in the greater Port Ludlow area. As reported yesterday in the *PT Leader*, the outage will extend south of Highway 104 to the Shine Road and Thorndyke Road regions, as well. The power shutdown is needed so PUD workers can conduct maintenance at the Port Ludlow substation.

Line crews will also be working along Beaver Valley Road between Swansonville Road and Oak Bay Road, and drivers will see traffic revisions and flaggers in the area as crews conduct multiple switching operations. Traffic will be reduced to a single lane at each switching location to make room for line trucks. So, plan ahead. Outage updates will be available on the PUD's social media pages, as well as on the utility's website, <https://www.jeffpud.org/>. You can also go to the *PT Leader* website and look at a map (<https://www.ptleader.com/>) which shows the areas affected.

Dr. Allison Berry, Health Officer for Jefferson and Clallam counties, spoke yesterday morning to the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and gave a report on respiratory viruses in the county:

Audio Clip: "By and large, the news on the viral front is good, so COVID-19 rates nationwide are downtrending as are hospitalizations and deaths. Of course we do still see a high number of deaths – far higher than we would see in any severe flu season, so it's still a very serious virus that's important to take seriously, but things are moving in a positive direction at the nationwide level, and locally as well. In Washington State, case rates are relatively flat, hospitalizations are downtrending and death rates are relatively flat as well..."

Jefferson County Public Health reports that 55 new cases were added from the past two weeks, so 6,820 cases of COVID-19 in Jefferson County since the pandemic began. The case rate is 168 per hundred thousand, but the County estimates only 1 in 13 cases are currently being reported, so despite the case rate now falling into the moderate category, that still would mean an extremely high rate of transmission: nearly 2,200 cases per hundred thousand and about 550 new cases in the past two weeks. There is one person hospitalized, but no new deaths have been reported, leaving the total number of those who have died at 34 due to COVID-19 in Jefferson County.

For all data, there is a link on the transcript for the Jefferson County Public Health Covid-19 Dashboard (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1466/Case-Information>). That page is only being fully updated twice a month at this point. The case numbers are falling but at that extremely high rate. It is still recommended to wear a high-quality, well-fitting mask in public indoor settings.

Dr. Allison Berry's next health report to the BOCC will be on Tuesday, February 21. You can ask questions by sending them to contactus@kptz.org by noon Friday, February 17.

According to an article published online yesterday on the *PT Leader* website, the people of Port Townsend have officially (unofficially) named their desires for the future of the town's golf course, the greatest number of which have spoken in favor of a return to nature.

(I added unofficially because the numbers are numbers represent the results of a survey, and because of the way in which it was conducted it cannot be relied upon to represent “one person and one vote.” It is possible, as the process continues, and the choices presented are narrowed, there might be more of a consensus.)

After conducting online and in-person surveys on the fate of the golf course with a variety of options available, the top five priorities were:

- walking/biking trails (346 votes)
- habitat restoration (288)
- a renovated golf course (218)
- nature play (182), and
- a community garden (164)

Kah Tai Prairie, listed separately from habitat restoration, came in towards the bottom of the list with 102 votes, but if included with the rest of the habitat restoration numbers would have made it the top priority with 390 combined votes.

The destiny of the Mountain View Commons site was also included in the survey, and people overwhelmingly voted the pool as the number one priority with a total of 479 votes. The next public stakeholder meeting to discuss how these results will be used is Thursday, February 9. After that, a second open house yet to be scheduled for mid-April will offer possible designs plans integrating the new priorities.

KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and five Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through news@kptz.org. Thanks for listening and have a pleasant day.