

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM. I'm Jim Burke, with local news and commentary for Tuesday, April 4, 2023.

Calling all Creatives! The Port Townsend Creative District goals include connecting audiences with artists to strengthen the opportunity for their financial success and help support a year-round economy for artists. They are looking for artists' input. Artists can take a brief survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BJGP836>) to help them learn how the Creative District can best serve our local artists.

The 2023 Concerts on the Dock lineup has been announced. On Thursdays in July and August starting on:

July 13 - Global Heat

July 20 - WEPA

July 27 - The Shift

And in August, starting:

August 3 - Toolshed Combo

August 10 - Uncle Funk & the Dope Six

August 17 - The Cosmophonics with North Beach & True Reckoning

August 24 - Olympic Express Big Band

And, wrapping it up:

August 31 - Kevin Mason & the PT All Stars

Jefferson County Public Health reports the two-week COVID-19 case rate is 134 cases per 100,000 people. Jefferson County Public Health estimates that 1 in 20 COVID-19 cases in Jefferson County were reported to Public Health last week. No one is currently hospitalized with COVID-19 in Jefferson County. There were no new deaths this week, so the total number of those who have died due to COVID-19 is 37 in Jefferson County.

In Clallam County the case rate is 80 per hundred thousand – the low category – and the case ascertainment is also 1 in 20. Two patients are currently hospitalized, and no new deaths to report, so the total number of those who have died due to COVID-19 in Clallam County stands at 166.

Dr. Allison Berry spoke to the Jefferson Board of County Commissioners yesterday and discussed the wind-down of emergency declarations across the country, the state, and Jefferson and Clallam Counties. She said that we are still seeing a downward trend in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths due to COVID-19 nationally, in Washington State, and locally. It is too soon to tell, she said, if we are seeing a seasonal fall off in cases. As we are fully in the endemic phase of the pandemic, she stressed that COVID-19 is here to stay, and time will tell if we have seasonal surges, as we have with the flu.

A listener question to Dr. Berry was about a rollout of second doses of the bivalent booster in Canada for those with underlying health issues and the elderly. The listener was asking if that protocol might be rolled out here in the U.S. and she answered that those would be available only if the CDC and the FDA approve such a measure. That would depend on increasing case counts of severe disease, which is not currently happening here in the U.S. The best way to mitigate risk is to be up to date on vaccinations including one dose of the bivalent booster, masking when necessary, and if an individual is immunocompromised, or is caring for someone who is, avoiding large, crowded gatherings. You can listen to Dr. Berry's full remarks from yesterday on our website, [KPTZ.org](https://www.kptz.org)

Surjit Gill, Jonathan Stringer, David Ameh, Demetrius Sellers, and Harold Felton were workers each lost to recent trench collapses while on the job. Their deaths could have been prevented if their employers had done more for workplace safety. The state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) is stepping up enforcement at excavation sites, where 35 workers across America died in 2022.

A recent L&I op-ed details the unfortunate and preventable circumstances of recent worker deaths. In one instance, a company had been cited more than four times for serious safety violations in the years preceding a deadly trench collapse. In another, workers were sent into a trench 20 feet deep with no safe exit and no prior inspection. It collapsed, killing a worker. There was a trench collapse at a construction site at New York's JFK airport just yesterday and two workers were killed. This can happen anywhere. The common denominator of most workplace deaths is that carelessness preceded them. In addition to accelerating inspections at excavation sites, L&I is calling on workers to report unsafe conditions. Braced or sloped walls, accessible ladders, inspections, and other common safety standards are the law, and they are the minimum standard that employers should uphold to protect their workers. When those requirements are ignored, workers die and employers face jail time. You can read the op-ed in *The Tacoma News Tribune*, and report safety hazards via the L&I site (<https://www.lni.wa.gov/>).

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. This is Jim Burke. Thanks for listening!