

Hello again! This is Derek Firenze with your local news and commentary for Thursday, September 7, 2023 on KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington.

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Not that you'd ever think of going near a stray seal pup or a wild bird corpse, but in case you needed even more of a reason not to, the Washington Department of Health has just announced the avian influenza outbreak is impacting not only seabirds but also seals near Fort Flagler State Park. To repeat, the Department of Health and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife caution the public to avoid contact with wild birds and other wild animals, especially sick or dead wild animals or their young.

The avian influenza – or bird flu – outbreak started in early July and was previously reported by KPTZ in regards to the seabirds. Fish and Wildlife staff are monitoring and responding to the situation and have removed more than 1,700 dead Caspian terns and gulls from Rat Island and adjacent shores near Fort Flagler State Park. Preliminary results indicate three harbor seals from the same area were also infected with avian influenza. Confirmation testing is pending.

Again, people and their pets should avoid all contact with sick or dead wildlife. While avian influenza infections among people are rare, human infections can happen when the virus gets into a person's eyes, nose, or mouth, or is inhaled. People may be at greater risk of bird flu virus infection during close or lengthy unprotected contact with infected animals or surfaces contaminated with saliva or feces of infected animals. Dogs and other animals can become sick with avian influenza, and care should be taken to avoid contact between pets and sick or dead animals. Do not attempt to move sick wild animals to a veterinarian or rehabilitation center or to your home, as this can spread the disease. Fish and Wildlife continues to ask members of the public who find sick or dead birds to report them immediately using an online form at <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/a384e90f69744f2e846135a9ce80027f>.

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You can help fight a sickness even more threatening to humans by learning how to aid victims of addiction with the life-saving overdose treatment Naloxone on September 26 at 3pm from Jefferson County Public Health Harm Reduction Coordinator, Anya Callahan. Anya will be in the Humphrey Room at the Jefferson County Library explaining what an overdose looks like, and how to approach a person who might be experiencing an overdose. She will also show participants how to administer Naloxone and share locations in the community where it is available. Naloxone dispensers provided by Jefferson County Public Health have also been installed at the entrance to the Quilcene Fire Station as well as at the Quilcene Community Center. These dispensers provide free access to the opioid overdose reversal medication. This will improve the capacity of bystander rescuers to save the lives of victims of opioid overdose. Instructions are also provided with each Naloxone kit. And in Port Townsend, The Nest in Uptown received around one-hundred doses of Naloxone which they are happy to provide to the community, and staff members there are trained to discuss its use and importance.

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Another scourge our community has a chance to stand up to is perhaps closer to home. Hazardous waste can be especially complicated to contend with, and to that end Jefferson County Solid Waste is having their Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event for 2023 on Saturday, September 16 from 10am to 2pm at the Quilcene Roads Shop and, during those same hours (10 to 2), on Saturday, September 30 at the Haines Park & Ride in Port Townsend. If a container has the words caution, warning, flammable, combustible, danger, toxic, or poison and still has product inside, it does not belong in the garbage or recycling. The collection event is for residential customers only with no fee for collection beneath a limit of 25 gallons of paint, 20 total gallons of fuel, and

container sizes equal to or less than five gallons, as larger containers are difficult to pour. It's also important to note that those containers will not be returned.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon and 5pm Monday through Friday and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us through [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). This is Derek Firenze. Thanks for listening.