

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Friday, November 8, 2024.

The Washington State Department of Health has reported a significant increase in cases of whooping cough. As of November 2, 1,193 cases have been reported statewide, a sharp increase from just 51 cases reported at this time last year. To date 28 people have been hospitalized, including 12 infants under the age of one. Infants, particularly those under one year old, are at the highest risk for severe illness and death.

Whooping cough is highly contagious, and often begins with common cold symptoms such as a runny nose, but it can lead to severe coughing fits that can last for weeks or even months. Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent its severity, so the Department of Health is urging all those who interact with infants and young children to ensure they're up to date on their whooping cough vaccinations. Pregnant people are strongly encouraged to get the Tdap vaccine (<https://doh.wa.gov/you-and-your-family/immunization/diseases-and-vaccines/tetanus-diphtheria-and-pertussis#vaccine>) between 27 and 36 weeks of pregnancy, to protect their newborns until they're old enough to start the vaccination series. Young children need four doses of vaccine before 18 months of age for best protection. To help with vaccination efforts, the state's Childhood Vaccine Program offers free or low-cost vaccinations for children under 19. Families can find a provider on the department website

(<https://wadoh.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d35642cbbd32419787341d2e27d9a75f>).

Antibiotic treatment for people who have whooping cough also helps reduce the spread, and in some cases antibiotics can be used to prevent infection in people who have been exposed but do not yet have symptoms. Visit the CDC's website (<https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/signs-symptoms/index.html>) for more information on symptoms. And if you believe you have whooping cough, stay home, cover your coughs and sneezes, and contact your healthcare provider.

The Port Townsend *Leader* reports that the Port Townsend Marine Science Center Aquarium on the pier at Fort Worden State Park will close permanently on December 1, with contents moving to the museum across the street to combine wet and dry exhibits in the same space.

The aquarium's closure has been planned for some time, as both the pier and the aquarium building are nearing the end of their life span. New exhibits and tanks – made possible by a \$75,000 federal grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services – will be built in the museum over the next several months. Some of the 70 species of local fish and invertebrates living in the 12 aquarium exhibits will be transferred to the new tanks, while others will be sent to another marine center or released into the ocean, pending release permits. The move across the street has already begun – there's already one sunflower star in its own tank – but it will be a slow process. Like the aquarium, the museum will close its doors to the public on December 1, but will reopen in the spring, after planned renovations there have been completed.

The *Leader* also reports that County crews have finished installing sewer pipe in parts of the Port Hadlock core area and have begun paving. On the list of roads slated for paving are Masonic Hall Road, Matheson Street, Irondale Road, Alley Street, Curtiss Street, the trail to Ajax Cafe parking lot, Scott Road, and behind Kivley Center. The next steps in the project will include sewer lines installed along Cedar and Mason Streets and a traverse across Ness' Corner Road. The Cedar and Mason Street lines will provide the necessary infrastructure

for Habitat for Humanity's Mason Street project – a 17-acre multifamily affordable housing project adjacent to the Jefferson County Library. Once the project is completed, in July 2025, the treatment plant will be able to handle 90,000 gallons per day, enabling the Port Hadlock Urban Growth Area to support more housing, medical facilities, higher density multifamily residences, and senior housing, as well as commercial and industrial development.

And finally, due to a statewide data system outage, Jefferson County District Court is currently operating with limited services until further notice. Only essential court functions will be available, and front counter and telephone services are limited. Though the court remains open to the public, users are urged to call 360-385-9135 ahead of time before traveling in person. If you are scheduled for a proceeding, you should plan to attend unless you are notified otherwise.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.