

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker with your local news and commentary for Thursday, June 19, 2025.

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Today is officially Juneteenth, which commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. In honor of this day, and to encourage our community to reflect upon its significance, the Jefferson County courthouse, Port Townsend City Hall, the PUD offices, Jefferson County Public Health, and Port Townsend Library will be closed for the day.

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Tomorrow, June 20, the annual serpentine parade for graduating seniors will take place, and the community is invited to line the streets to honor this rite of passage for our youth and the families that support them. The cars transporting our graduating students to their commencement at Fort Worden will leave Blue Heron at 5:30pm and proceed along San Juan Avenue to F Street, then follow Benton to Lawrence, then Monroe to Water Street, then back up Kearney to Blaine and Walker Streets to follow Cherry up to Fort Worden and Commencement, which be held at the McCurdy Pavilion at 7pm.

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The Edmonds ferry dock has been the scene of two major incidents this week. Ferry traffic between Edmonds and Kingston was halted for several hours Sunday afternoon and evening after a fatal accident occurred at the dock involving a train and a pedestrian. And around midnight on Tuesday, a car being driven erratically through town to avoid police pursuit drove off the edge of the dock, destroying the ferry crossing arms in the process. According to the *Seattle Times*, two of the car's five passengers did not survive the plunge. The driver, a 29-year-old man from Tulalip, was among the three injured survivors who were taken to Harborview.

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Speaking of ferries, the *Washington State Standard* informs us that ferry travel will cost more this fall and even more next spring. Fares are scheduled to increase by 3% on October 1 and another 3% on May 1, 2026, and there will be a 3% fee on credit card transactions beginning March 1, 2026. The Washington State Transportation Commission also recommended hiking the summer season surcharge to 35% on all routes and, on a trial basis, extending the life of multi-ride passes from 90 to 120 days starting next May. Those increases would be in addition to actions taken earlier hiking the capital surcharge tacked onto each ticket from 50 cents to \$1 starting October 1. That money is used to fund construction of new state ferries.

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Yet another leak – the fifth such leak in the past year – in the city's Olympic Gravity Water System was discovered earlier this month in the city's Olympic Gravity Water System, near the Eaglemount area. The pipe was given a temporary patch, but the patch doesn't completely stop the leak, and the city is concerned the leak will grow and cause property damage to the adjacent property owner, leading to more claims on the city for water damage.

Council therefore passed an emergency declaration this past Monday night to allow staff to forego the public bidding process in order to expedite the fabrication of a longer-term solution; something called an encapsulated engineered coupler. Unfortunately, in order to install the coupler the paper mill would need to be shut down. The mill would prefer to wait for their next scheduled shutdown, which won't be until November. But Public

Works Director Steve King told the *Peninsula Daily News* that “We’re initially uncomfortable waiting for the mill shutdown in November because this could go any day,” adding that the pipeline is essential to the city and we only have three days of storage in our reservoirs. According to the *Peninsula Daily News*, Port Townsend Paper did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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And finally, if you’re thinking of hiking or camping in the mountains this weekend, be sure to check [weather.gov](http://weather.gov) before you go: snow levels are expected to fall to near 5000 feet starting on Friday afternoon and lasting through midday Saturday, particularly over the Cascades. Be sure to take necessary precautions before heading out and notify friends and family of your plans.

...And if you’re traveling uptown this coming Monday, June 23, be aware that Tyler Street will be closed to traffic while city crews paint bike lanes and parking stalls and finish up asphalt work.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org). I’m Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.