

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, September 9, 2025.

Around 11am on September 6, a fire was reported in Olympic National Forest near the Tunnel Creek Trail #841 in the Buckhorn Wilderness. The fire – named the Tunnel Creek Fire – is burning on a steep, rocky slope south of Tunnel Creek and southwest of Quilcene. The fire is approximately 100 acres and was apparently started by a lightning strike. There is no current threat to structures or nearby communities. The Tunnel Creek Trail is closed until further notice, and visitors are asked to avoid the area. Due to the steep and rocky terrain, helicopters will be used to apply buckets of water to the fire. Additional resources are incoming.

Jeffco PUD has experienced a pump failure at their Kala Point well and has implemented a MANDATORY usage restriction to ensure reservoir levels are maintained. Kala Point is part of their connected Quimper system, which is working non-stop to support demand, so any effort to reduce water usage is greatly appreciated. Crews are on site coordinating repairs. Kala Point Water System Customers are asked to avoid outdoor watering, hosing down driveways and patios, and washing cars, boats, or trailers at home until further notice.

The PUD also warns us that as of yesterday their tree trimming season has begun, so watch out for crews on the roadway. The trimming will start along Old Anderson Lake Road and continue through November 28, trimming trees across the PUD service area, including Marrowstone Island and Port Townsend. Because tree branches are the #1 cause of power outages, trimming helps prevent storm-related outages as well as preparing the way for future fiber-optic cable installation in the Jefferson North and Discovery Bay East areas, which will be starting later this year.

Now that school is back in session, the Jefferson County Sheriff's office reminds us to drive slowly in active school zones. Not only do traffic fines double in active school zones, but also the fine for passing a school bus that has stopped to pick up or drop off students is \$433. Note: the buses have cameras that record any cars that pass illegally.

According to the *Washington State Standard*, the Washington State Department of Health has issued a standing order for the COVID-19 vaccine, making it easier for Washington residents to get vaccinated. The action comes after the state, along with Oregon and California, formed the West Coast Health Alliance earlier last week. Hawaii joined the alliance on Thursday. Washington's Department of Health has now reaffirmed its guidance that everyone 6 months and older, including pregnant people, should stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations to protect against severe illness, hospitalization, and death. This recommendation aligns with guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Academy of Family Physicians. The alliance is a direct response to concerns that recent federal actions have undermined the independence of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and politicized the use of science in ways that will harm public health. The standing order, announced Friday, allows most Washington

residents to go directly to a pharmacy or clinic and receive the COVID-19 vaccine without an individual prescription.

In celebration of one of their historically busiest weeks of the year, the Jefferson County Solid Waste Transfer Station has had a major equipment failure. A fix is not expected until this coming Saturday, September 13, so expect long delays if you're dropping off trash. Recycling is still available, as it does not rely on the equipment that broke down.

And finally, The Wall That Heals will arrive today at Jefferson County Airport. The Wall, a 300-foot-long three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is a traveling exhibit that honors the more than three million Americans who served in the Vietnam War. The exhibit, which includes a mobile education center, will officially open at 10am this Thursday and will remain open 24 hours a day until Sunday at 2pm. The Wall That Heals is hosted by the Port Townsend American Legion, Marvin G. Shields Memorial Post 26, and Port Hadlock VFW Post 7498.

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