

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Tuesday, April 7, 2026.

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Wildfire season is starting early this year. Despite the recent rains, the Brinnon fire department is currently battling a brush fire in the area of Camelot Road and Sharon's Way. At this time, there is no threat to the public or nearby structures. But crews are actively working to contain the fire, so please avoid the area, watch for emergency vehicles, and give crews space to work safely.

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According to the *Leader*, the rise in gas prices due to the military conflict with Iran is not only hitting Washington state harder than all but two other states in the nation, but also Jefferson County's gas prices are the sixth-highest out of Washington state's 39 counties. As of March 30, regular gas prices in Washington averaged \$5.33, and diesel averaged \$6.56, up from \$4.36 for regular and \$4.89 for diesel one month earlier. This marks Washington's average gas and diesel prices as the third-highest in the nation, with only California and Hawaii placing higher.

Although AAA's highest recorded average price for regular gas in Washington state remains \$5.55 on June 16, 2022, Washington's average price of \$6.56 for diesel fuel on Sunday, March 29, of this year is the highest ever recorded by AAA for the state. In conclusion, Washington residents are paying roughly 32% more per gallon than the rest of the country, with prices having increased by 77 cents in less than a month.

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If you're a business owner, consider Jefferson County's C-PACER program. C-PACER stands for Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency. The C-PACER program provides 100% private financing for energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, and resilience improvements, with long repayment terms and no upfront cost. Because the assessment stays with the property, not the owner, it's an investment in the value of your building. For more information, visit <https://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/1655/C-PACER>.

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Jefferson County PUD is offering an unusual opportunity tomorrow morning at 10: a behind-the-scenes look at their state-of-the-art Wastewater Facility at 236 Lopeman Road in Port Hadlock. You might think, sewer tours – yuck! But this is a great opportunity to join Jefferson PUD's Wastewater Treatment plant operator, Joey Barkle, for a guided tour following the journey from the drain to the "bug farm" (yes, really). Tours are offered every Wednesday in April, so if you can't make this Wednesday, try another. Tours are limited to 20 participants.

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Both the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and the Washington State Ferries have posted advisories about the fact that April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Because our ferry system is part of the state highway network, you should know that the same distracted driving laws apply. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving – talking or texting on your phone, talking to passengers in your vehicle, changing the radio station, programming your GPS and yes, even eating or drinking can qualify. In 2024, 315,167 people were injured by distracted drivers and 3,208 were killed. So stay off your cell phone while you're driving, keep your eyes on the road, and know that Jefferson County officers will be doing extra patrols this month to help stop distracted drivers.

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The Port Townsend Public Works Department would like to remind residents that property owners are required to maintain the public space that lies between your property and the street. They thank those residents and property owners who have kept their street frontage mowed: by doing that mowing you give city street crews time to focus on street improvements and maintenance such as stormwater work, filling potholes, street repair, and sewer inspections. To learn more about maintaining your right of way, please visit [https://cityofpt.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public\\_works/page/6251/right\\_of\\_way\\_maintenance\\_requirements\\_1-1.pdf](https://cityofpt.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/public_works/page/6251/right_of_way_maintenance_requirements_1-1.pdf).

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And finally, though the numbers are down locally for respiratory infections, the *Peninsula Daily News* reports there's been a Covid outbreak at a long-term care facility in Jefferson County. Dr. Allison Berry, the health officer for both Peninsula counties, reminds us that now would be a good time for folks 65 and older to get their spring Covid booster shots.

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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.