

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm with local news and commentary for Thursday, April 4, 2026.

\*\*\*

In response to the deadly chemical implosion that killed 11 employees at the Nippon Dynawave paper mill in Longview, a Jefferson County resident has written a letter of concern to local leaders asking that the state Department of Ecology be asked to conduct an inspection of the Port Townsend Paper Mill, which uses the same caustic chemicals that caused the Longview deaths.

In addition to an independent inspection of the mill's white liquor storage tanks, the letter, written by David Ginsberg, requests that the county's emergency management team meet with the mill to update the county's emergency response plan for a caustic chemical spill; that the mill voluntarily disclose its white liquor tank capacities and most recent inspection records; and that any regulatory findings from the Longview investigation be applied to the mill.

In a press release dated June 1, Port Townsend Paper Company (PTPC) stated that the firm has enhanced inspections and testing following the implosion, that they plan on scheduling further testing to reassess tank conditions, and that they are meeting with industry experts to discuss possible reasons for the Longview failure and how they might apply to PTPC equipment. "As we learn more about the root cause of the failure at Nippon Dynawave, we will adjust our plans accordingly," PTPC wrote. "As a long-standing member of the Port Townsend community, we remain dedicated to protecting our employees, our neighbors, and the environment."

EPA records for the mill, however, show a consistent history of non-compliance and significant violations, with 23 informal enforcement actions in the last five years, 4 formal enforcement actions in the past five years, and \$63,750 in fines paid over the last five years.

\*\*\*

83-year-old Raea Stika of Port Townsend was attacked by a deer last week. In the early hours of May 27, Stika was standing in her front yard after letting her small dog outside when a doe came rushing around the side of her house. According to the Leader, the doe – apparently protecting a fawn later found under a nearby vehicle – charged at her dog and began stomping on it, then turned its attention toward Stika, stood on its hind legs and began kicking her, throwing her to the ground. Stika's husband managed to chase away the deer, but EMT's arrived on the scene at 6am to find Stika lying in the driveway with lacerations on her arm and bruising on her face, jaw, legs and neck. Stika was transported to Jefferson Healthcare and will be sent home next week.

\*\*\*

Quilcene Fire Rescue reports that AT&T and FirstNet cellular data service went down yesterday in Quilcene due to an issue with the local tower. Concerned that the outage might affect some public safety devices, emergency responders were alerted to rely on radio communications as needed, and FirstNet dispatched a Cell on Wheels unit from North Bend to restore service for FirstNet Devices. Fortunately, 911 calls could still go through, and service was restored by yesterday evening.

\*\*\*

Seventy48, a motorless boat race over 70 miles within 48 hours, took place last weekend, and was won by Team Tritons. The trio – Dave Jensen, Rich Long, and Andrew McEwan – paddled their three-man Carbonology Surfski the 70 miles from Tacoma to Port Townsend in exactly 9 hours and 50 minutes.

Salish Rescue was on hand to provide support for the race, and twice rescued dories from rough seas; towed a sailboat that ran aground; recovered a runaway skiff from Rat Island; retrieved both a kayaker and a paddleboarder who went ashore at Indian Island; and averted several other potential issues.

\*\*\*

Good news for the Chimacum High School Cowboy Marching Band: the community fundraiser to support their trip to Washington DC, where they'll represent Washington State in the nation's 250th Independence Day Parade, has raised nearly \$150,000, almost half again as much as they had hoped to raise.

\*\*\*

And finally, this Saturday's intergenerational Pride Festival will take place at the Pope Marine Park from noon to 5pm, with music, drag performances, speakers, food, and local vendors. To learn more about the event, visit <https://www.theproductionalliance.org/ptpride>.

\*\*\*

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, and have a great weekend.