

NE Oregon Joint Information Center

Union and Wallowa Counties



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For Immediate Release

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La Grande, Oregon – Volunteers and community involvement are crucial when conducting a clinic with extremely short notice such as what was completed last week in Union County. Participants included several volunteers from Union County Search and Rescue, La Grande Rural Fire Protection District, La Grande Fire, La Grande District of Oregon Department of Forestry, Center for Human Development, Inc., Union County employees, American Medical Response team, and the Baker County Medical Reserve Corp. Their assistance was greatly appreciated!

We have heard from many individuals interested in volunteer opportunities to assist our community through the COVID-19 pandemic. A variety of options are available through the American Red Cross, and locally, we are always in need of additional volunteers. To apply, go to <https://www.redcross.org/local/oregon.html>. Questions can be addressed by email to heather.stanhope@redcross.org or you may contact the local office at (541) 962-0952 and leave a message for a return call. Additional volunteer opportunities are available locally through Community Connection of NE Oregon for Union and Wallowa Counties. Union County Community Connection is in dire need of volunteers to assist with the food bank and in the kitchen for a variety of duties. For additional information, contact (541) 426-3840 in Wallowa County, or (541) 963-7532 in Union County.

Preliminary numbers indicate 609 COVID-19 tests were conducted on Thursday and Friday of last week in Union County. To date, 254 of those tests have been processed returning a total of 15 additional COVID-19 positive confirmed cases. These numbers could change in the next several hours, but it is anticipated that these cases will be included in the total released tomorrow by Oregon Health Authority. We will update the testing event numbers as they become available. Final numbers for the testing event may not be available until the end of this week or over the upcoming weekend. The delay in reporting times is due to the tests utilized on Friday were from a different laboratory out of the area requiring longer shipping times.

Today, Oregon Health Authority announced five new confirmed cases for Union County bringing the total number of COVID-19 cases to 263. This total does not yet include the above-mentioned 15 cases. Wallowa County has a total of eight cases. Investigations, contact tracings, and additional testing are underway in both counties. Statewide, there are a total of 7,083 cases.

Individuals who have been tested are reminded that self-isolation/quarantine is necessary to lower the chance of spreading illness. This includes not attending any activities or gatherings outside your home such as work, school, health care, faith-based facilities, grocery stores, restaurants, etc. Do not allow any visitors to your home. Do not touch others or have them touch you. To do so while isolated/quarantined could further spread the disease.

It is vital that workplaces support employees who are required to quarantine and not ask them to go to work in these situations. We ask that local employers to make it easy for people to make the choice to stay home by promoting working from home when possible, applying paid sick leave policies liberally, and linking employees to any workplace resources available. We also realize that for many employers and employees that this is a difficult situation. Multiple resources are available through wraparound services to include financial assistance, food bank information, grocery pickup/delivery, health insurance, and Veterans services. Information is available at: <http://neojic.union-county.org/2020/06/22/wrap-resources/>.

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