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The Reflector

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SCAFFOLDS UP FOR RIDGEFIELD RAIL OVERPASS

Project on schedule for late 2021 opening, latest project update states



PHOTO COURTESY PORT OF RIDGEFIELD

The Pioneer Street Rail Overpass in Ridgefield is coming along on schedule, construction that will eventually lead to vehicle and pedestrian access to port land and the marina without the need to make at-grade crossings of the railroad.

Port of Ridgefield provided a project update photo, taken from the southwest side of the project, showing falsework set up to support the overpass construction.

With construction started in March, the port stated that the project is on schedule. A project update last month indicated the

target completion is late fourth quarter 2021.

In November, the port awarded the construction contract to Tapani Inc. for a bid of about \$8.2 million. The construction is the third phase of the overall project, building the above-grade span that will connect approaching roads built in prior phases.

In a social media post from Nov. 10, the

Inslee orders new COVID-19 restrictions

Indoor dining, gyms among affected activities, with indoor social gatherings officially banned

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A number of businesses will have to restrict operations as part of a new set of orders issued by Gov. Jay Inslee intended to stop the "third wave" of COVID-19 in the state. It's an executive action similar, but smaller in scope, to the initial "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order put in place at the start of the pandemic.

During a rare Sunday morning press conference Nov. 15, Inslee announced several new restrictions ranging from banning indoor restaurant and bar service to more requirements on religious services. The orders are currently set to run for four weeks. The restrictions generally prohibit indoor operations of a number of business types and activities, or impose capacity restrictions on others, including retail.

Under the new restrictions, indoor social gatherings with individuals outside of one's household were prohibited in most cases, unless an individual quarantined for 14 days prior to the gathering, or seven days before if they received a negative COVID-19 test result fewer than 48 hours before the gathering. Outdoor gatherings are limited to five people.

Another restriction would stop indoor dining at restaurants and bars, with restricted outdoor dining and takeout services still allowed. Table sizes will be restricted to five for outdoor dining.

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Clark County COVID-19: 832 new cases, six deaths in past week

THE REFLECTOR

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Clark County rose by more than 800 in the past week, as the county continues on an accelerated trajectory in the disease's spread.

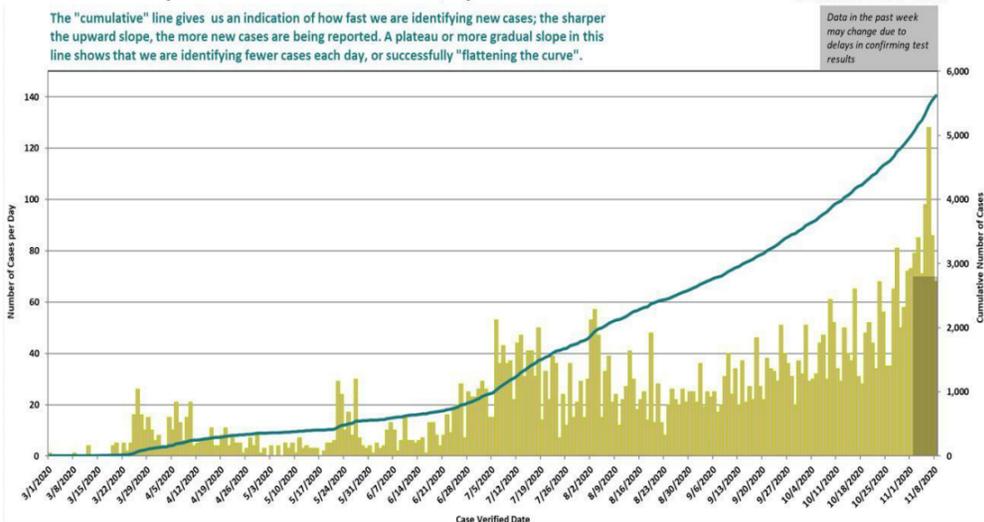
Clark County Public Health's Nov. 13 update puts the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases at 6,160 since the outbreak began. The department reported there were 451 active cases in the county, which are cases still in the isolation period.

Friday's update shows that cases had grown by 832 between Nov. 6 and Nov. 13, above the 527 positive tests reported between Oct. 30 and Nov. 6. The county's weekly case rate saw a significant increase as well, rising to 171.55 per 100,000 of its population in the past 14 days, up from 131.42 per 100,000 the week prior.

Public Health also reported six deaths of individuals with confirmed COVID-19. The deaths included four men — two in their 70s with no underlying health conditions and two older than 80 with underlying health conditions — and two women, one older than 80 and another in her 70s who both had underlying health conditions.

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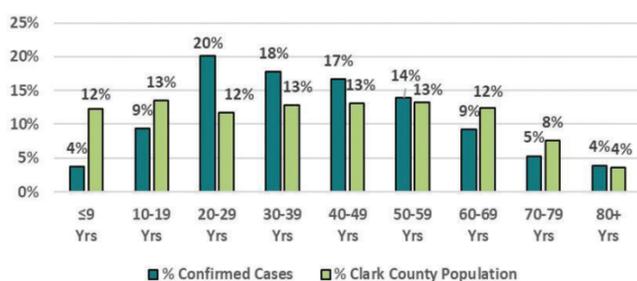
Clark County Confirmed COVID-19 Cases, by Case Verified Date



GRAPH COURTESY CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

A graph showing the daily number of confirmed cases of COVID-19, as well as a curve of cumulative cases, updated to Nov. 10. The left axis shows the number of new cases per day based on the date of testing, while the right shows the cumulative number.

Percentage of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Compared to Clark County Population, by Age Group



GRAPH COURTESY CLARK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

A graph showing the percentages of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Clark County, broken up by age group. The left bars show the percentage of cases, while the right bars show the age group's percentage of the total Clark County population

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State

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Gov. Jay Inslee and his wife, Trudi, address Washington State Nov. 12, urging residents not to take part in holiday gatherings, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In-store retail businesses including grocery stores are limited to 25 percent occupancy under the new restrictions, with congregate areas such as food courts closed. Religious services are limited to 25 percent indoor capacity or 200 people, whichever is less, with choirs, bands and ensemble acts prohibited from performing, though solo acts are allowed.

Fitness facilities such as gyms are closed for indoor operations per the new restrictions, with outdoor activities restricted to five people, per the general outdoor gathering rules. Bowling alleys, museums, zoos, aquariums and movie theaters are also closed for indoor service.

Inslee noted there were no new restrictions on childcare or K-12 education, keeping buildings open for districts that have started to phase in some students.

The majority of the restrictions take effect at 11:59 p.m. Nov. 16, while the restaurant restrictions go into effect at 12:01 a.m. Nov. 18. The restrictions are set to run until Dec. 14.

Although the restrictions will be in effect statewide, Inslee said they were not as comprehensive as ones put forth in the initial "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order made in March. He said which restrictions were made were

based on the science behind how COVID-19 spread, targeting activities where prolonged, maskless contact was most likely, such as restaurants and gyms.

The restrictions come as cases and hospitalizations have had increases, causing much concern from healthcare experts in the past few weeks. Inslee remarked that the day of the press conference was "the most dangerous public health day in over 100 years in our state's great history."

Washington State Health Officer Kathy Lofy said that the number of daily cases of COVID-19 had doubled in the past two weeks. There were about 2,300 cases Nov. 14, a record for the state that Inslee said health experts anticipated would be shortly broken.

Lofy added that the number of

COVID-19 patients in hospitals increased by 40 percent in the past week.

"This increase is simply not sustainable," Lofy said, adding hospitals would exceed capacity if the trajectory of the spread kept as it was.

Clint Wallace, an intensive care unit nurse at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane, said he's worked in ICUs for nearly 20 years, and the COVID-19 pandemic has been the busiest he has ever seen for work in those units.

"We're close as a whole (as) healthcare workers to being burnt out," Wallace said, "and we are pleading with the community of Washington and throughout the world to follow the directions and advice of our healthcare experts."

Inslee said the state is in a more dangerous position than it was in March when the outbreak began, given the onset of winter keeping people in their homes. Regarding the increase of cases, which has been described as a third wave of the disease since the pandemic began, Inslee said that "left unchecked, it will assuredly result in grossly overburdened hospitals," adding that deaths would increase and economic impacts would be prolonged. An influx of COVID-19 patients could

keep non-infected individuals from receiving care, he added.

Regarding potential enforcement of prohibited social gatherings, Inslee said Washingtonians shouldn't "expect state troopers coming to your door if you have a big Thanksgiving dinner," but making the restriction a legal requirement would persuade individuals who want to abide by the law to not take part in those activities.

"We're hopeful that (the prohibition on gatherings) will raise the consciousness of this issue," Inslee said, "and we know scientifically it really works."

Acknowledging layoffs and permanently-shuttered businesses that were impacted by prior restrictions, Inslee announced \$50 million would be allocated to mitigate impacts on businesses and workers through a combination of grants and loans.

"We also cannot enjoy a full economic recovery, which we all desperately want, without knocking down this virus," Inslee said. He added that the federal government also needed to step in with extending unemployment compensation and business assistance.

"The choices we have (made) today are not easy ones," Inslee said, "but I do believe that they are the right choices, given the threat that we face."

"We have done this once or twice before, so we know that if we continue to exercise diligence that we can continue to knock this (disease) down," Inslee said.

Inslee stressed to Washingtonians that the restrictions are a temporary measure to stop increased transmission until COVID-19 treatments and a vaccine would be available.

"We need to hold this pandemic down until the cavalry arrives," Inslee said.

Inslee urges Washington to stay home for Thanksgiving

Gov. Jay Inslee made a plea to Washingtonians not to gather with others outside of their households for the holiday season.

Inslee, joined by his wife, Trudi, gave an address Nov. 12 ahead of Thanksgiving, urging those thinking about bringing in family and loved ones from outside of their households or going

somewhere else for the holiday to reconsider.

"Simply put, we have to rethink these holidays," Inslee said, "so that we may be thankful when we don't lose more lives to COVID."

"This year, please don't gather with people outside your household. It's just too dangerous," Inslee said.

The governor said the weekly average of new COVID-19 cases in Washington had doubled in the past two weeks, adding that the level of "exponential growth" brought a level of danger that had not been seen since March. The increase has led to a "third wave" of the disease, which could be exacerbated by increased transmission in close contact during in-person celebrations like Thanksgiving dinners.

Acknowledging there had been widespread use of masks in public and efforts made by businesses to adapt to restrictions on operation, Inslee hinted to upcoming restrictions that he would formally announce a few days later. While those restrictions focused on activities outside of the home, the governor said that the message of the address was on a different aspect of what the state could do to stop the disease's spread.

"What's urgent right now most tonight is what we do in our own dwellings," Inslee said. He mentioned his family would be changing the usual festivities to celebrate Thanksgiving virtually.

Inslee said that stopping the in-person celebrations was a sign of caring for loved ones and the community at large given the potential for COVID-19 spread resulting from close contact.

"We love each other too much to put each other's health at risk," Inslee remarked.

Inslee said that due to the development of treatments of COVID-19 and the "imminent" arrival of a vaccine for the disease, "we're only going to have to do this once," regarding the change in celebration.

"The cavalry is on the way, but we need to keep people alive until it gets here," Inslee said.

"We're all fatigued, and it's OK to not feel OK right now," Trudi Inslee remarked, "but what happens next in our state depends on what happens in our families and in our homes."

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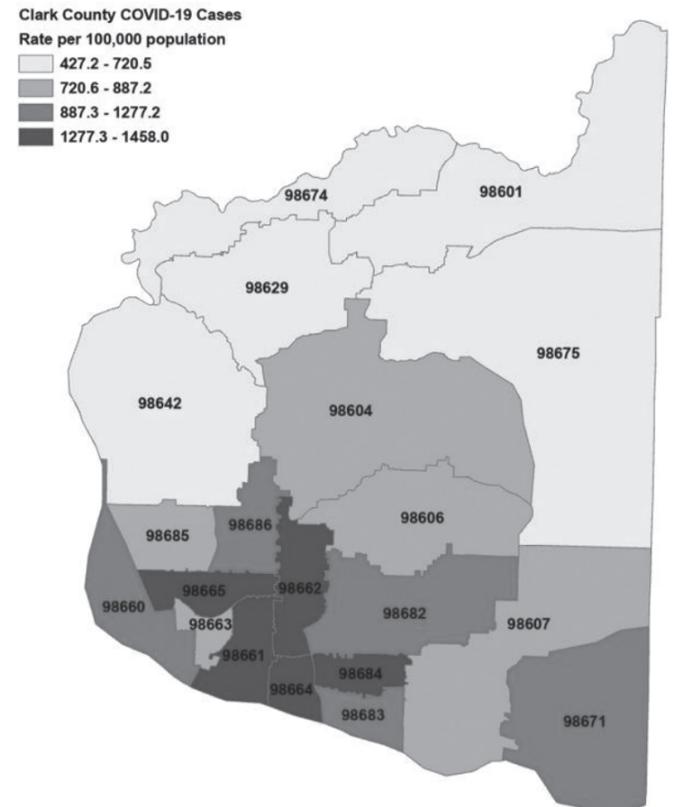
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The additional deaths put the total of individuals who have died in Clark County with confirmed COVID-19 cases at 79.

Public Health's Nov. 13 update reported that there were 46 patients with confirmed COVID-19 hospitalized in the county, with an additional six under investi-

gation, awaiting test results. Hospitalizations were up from 35 reported Nov. 6.

Clark County's share of COVID-19 cases and deaths statewide also saw an increase from the prior week. Washington State Department of Health data showed Clark County had about 4.6 percent of statewide cases and roughly 4 percent of deaths, up from 4.4 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively.



A map from Clark County Public Health shows areas by ZIP code where confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been tested. The rates per 100,000 of population in each ZIP code are shown by progressively deeper shades of color for a greater case rate.