



Jefferson County



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Central Oregon Public Health Monthly Update June 30, 2023

Summer is here and that means getting out to enjoy all Central Oregon has to offer. Make it a safe and healthy summer by taking steps to understand and prepare for local hazards.

Time to Prepare for Wildfire Season

Taking simple steps to prepare NOW is the best thing you can do to be ready for wildfires impacting Central Oregon.



Be Ready for Smoke

- Stock up on HEPA filters with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) of 13 or higher. Put one in your HVAC or build a DIY filter using a HEPA filter and newer (2012 or later) box fan. Visit deschutes.org/health/page/indoor-air-quality-iaq for instructions on building a DIY box fan air filter.
- Create a clean air room in your home. Seal windows and doors to prevent outdoor smoke from entering, and add an air purifier or DIY box fan filter.

Stay Informed

- Sign up for text alerts. Text “COFIRE” to 888-777 to get text alerts about prescribed burns and wildfires in your area.
- Know where to check the air quality index (AQI) and check it daily to plan your activities around periods of elevated smoke. A good resource that shows all the monitors and fire incidents is the Air Now Fire and Smoke Map: <https://fire.airnow.gov>.
- Find smoke forecasts and air quality advisories at: <https://www.oregonsmoke.org>.
- [Sign up for emergency alerts to be notified when there is an evacuation or other emergency in Deschutes County.](#) If you are already registered to receive alerts, log in to make sure that your contact information is updated.

Have a Plan

- Being prepared starts with having a plan and using an [evacuation checklist](#) as a guide. Establish a [communication plan](#) with a list of important contacts and a safe place for loved ones to meet if they are separated during an emergency.
- Identify multiple evacuation routes from home, work or school and plan for transportation needs. Discuss the plan with loved ones, friends and neighbors and practice it so everyone knows what to do during an emergency.
- People with disabilities should consider individual circumstances and specific needs when planning for evacuation, such as special equipment, transportation and service animals.
- Remember to include [pets and livestock](#) in your evacuation planning. Learn more about the [Pet Evacuation Team](#) serving Central Oregon’s animals during emergencies and evacuation.

Make a Go Kit






Assemble an emergency kit of essential supplies that can be grabbed in a hurry. Pack an easy-to-carry backpack or bag for each member of the household with health and safety items such as food, water, medication, flashlights, phone chargers and clothing. Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [American Red Cross](https://www.americanredcross.org) for recommended emergency kit items.

Know your Evacuation Levels

Oregon follows a three-level evacuation notification system. Whatever the level, conditions can change rapidly. If you feel unsafe at any time, you are encouraged to

evacuate. Learn more [here](#)

GO! DESCHUTES COUNTY EVACUATION GUIDE

<p>LEVEL 1: READY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready for evacuation • Prepare family with special needs (babies, elders), and pets or livestock • Check websites, news sites, and listen to the radio or TV for updates • Police or fire might contact you by text, phone, or a knock 	<p>LEVEL 2: SET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready to leave • There is danger in your area: load your car or be ready to leave on foot • Go to a shelter or to another place outside of your area • THIS MAY BE YOUR ONLY NOTICE 	<p>LEVEL 3: GO!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAVE NOW • Do not gather things • Do not protect your home • Obey police and fire • Drive calmly: watch for police and fire vehicles • Do not block roads for police or fire vehicles 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Before/During Fire Season</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register for emergency alerts: deschutesalerts.org • Create space around your home (firefree.org) • Plan how to move pets/livestock • Keep your car's fuel at least half full • Know other ways out of your area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know evacuation plans for your family members in school, assisted living and day care • Prepare a 72-hour kit • Pick an out-of-the-area contact who can help you relay information 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>After Evacuation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in at a shelter or online: www.redcross.org/safeandwell • Take pets to a pet evacuation center • DO NOT call 911 for non-emergencies • Don't go back into the fire 	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">  <div style="font-size: small;"> <p>To request this information in an alternate format, please call 541-388-6501 or send an email to emergency.management@deschutes.org</p> </div> </div>			<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">   <div style="font-size: x-small; text-align: center;"> <p>The fire departments and law enforcement agencies of Deschutes County assume no liability for the use or misuse of this information, which is intended to provide fire safety and emergency guidelines for residents. For up to date fire information, visit www.centraloregonfire.org</p> </div>   </div>

Find more information and resources at Wildfire.Oregon.gov/prepare.

Ticks- Nuisance or Risky?



Ticks are a common nuisance for hikers, gardeners and those who enjoy or work in the outdoors. Ticks are arthropods that feed on the blood of humans and other mammals (like dogs, horses and deer), birds and reptiles. It is important to avoid tick bites as some species of ticks can spread diseases.

There are many species of ticks in Oregon, but only a few feed on humans or pets. Ticks to be familiar with are the [American dog tick](#), the [Pacific Coast tick](#), the [Rocky Mountain wood tick](#) and the [Western Blacklegged tick](#). There are also soft ticks such as *Ornithodoros* species.

Do ticks in Oregon spread disease?

Yes, [Lyme disease](#), a bacterial disease, and other diseases spread by ticks have been found in Oregon.

The [Western Blacklegged tick](#) (*Ixodes pacificus*) is the primary species that pass Lyme disease to people and pets in the Western U.S., but some recent data suggests that only 3% to 8% of these ticks in Oregon carry the Lyme bacterium.

Other diseases spread by ticks have been found in Oregon including tick-borne relapsing fever, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia and Colorado tick fever. Cases of these diseases being contracted by tick bites in Oregon are very rare but something to be aware of.

What can I do to protect myself from ticks?

- Avoid wooded, brushy or grassy areas
- Stay on trails when hiking
- At home, remove leaf litter, clear tall grasses and brush, and keep wildlife out of your yard.
- Take a shower after being outdoors to help remove ticks from your skin before they can attach.
- Perform [daily tick checks](#) on yourself and your children after working or playing outdoors.

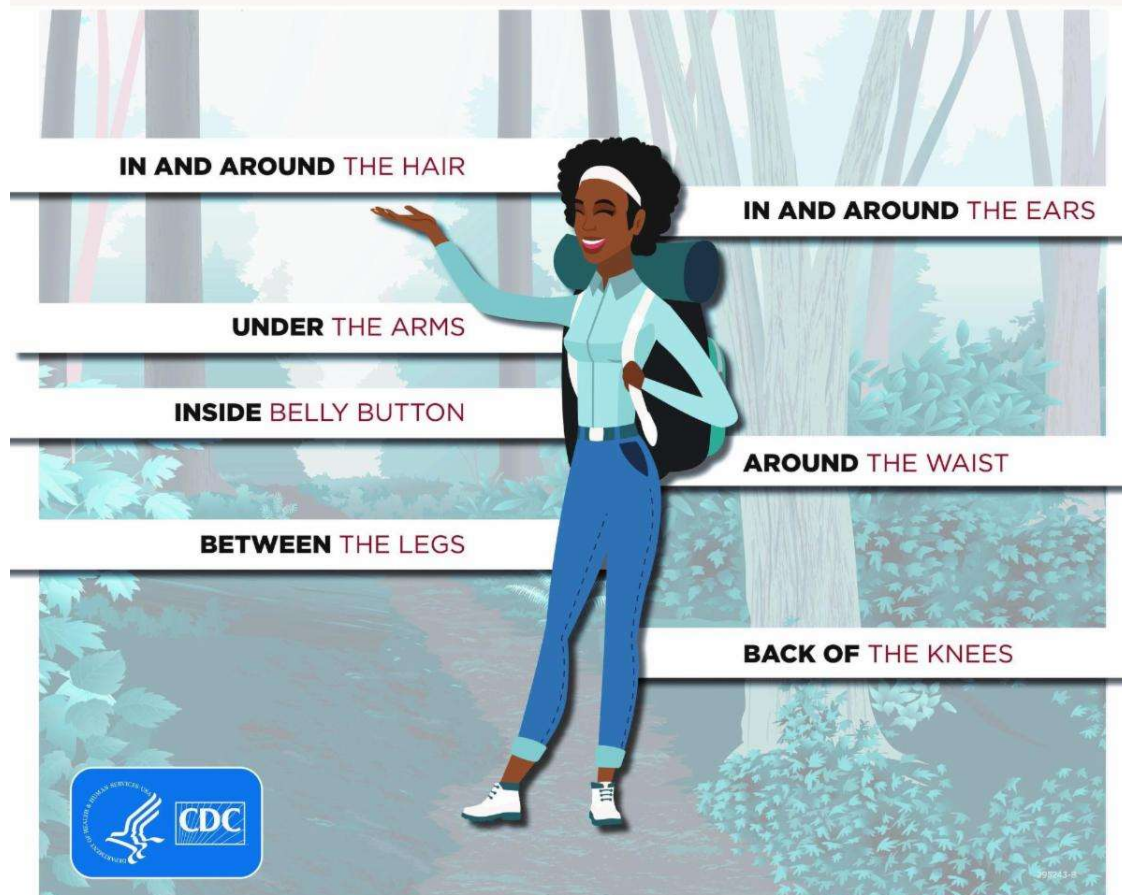
- Keep ticks off your skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, tucking pant legs into socks, and wearing closed-toe shoes. Choose light-colored clothing so it's easier to spot ticks.
- Use approved tick repellents according to the label directions. Use this [online search tool](#) to find the tick repellent that is best for your situation.

What should I do if I find a tick on me?

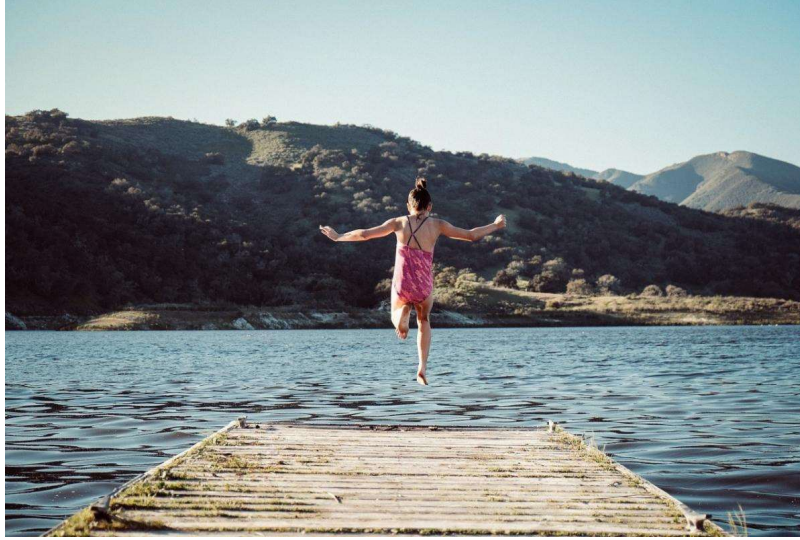
- Ticks found crawling on skin, clothing or gear can be disposed of by placing in alcohol or placing in a sealed container and thrown in the trash.
- Ticks that have become attached need to be carefully **removed** and **identified**. Follow the removal steps in this video from the [TickEncounter website](#). Place the tick in a sealed container with alcohol (isopropyl alcohol can be found in pharmacies) or in a sealed bag in the freezer. Note: Ticks that are damaged or stuck to tape are nearly impossible to identify. [Private labs offer fee-based services](#) to test ticks for common diseases.
- Reach out to your medical provider if you have difficulty removing the tick or develop any fever, rashes, aches or unusual symptoms after a tick bite. Communicate any possible tick exposures to your medical provider.

Check your clothing and body for ticks after being outdoors in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas where ticks live!

CHECK THESE PARTS OF YOUR BODY AND YOUR CHILD'S BODY FOR TICKS:



Avoid Swimmer's Itch



Swimmer's itch is a rash that can occur after you go swimming or wading outdoors. It's common in some of our lakes here in Central Oregon in mid- to late summer. Swimmer's itch is caused by an allergic reaction to a parasite that burrows into your skin while you are in infected warm water. These parasites are found in some animals that live near ponds and lakes, like geese and ducks, in conjunction with certain snail species.

Anyone who swims or wades in infested water may be at risk. Children are most often affected because they tend to swim, wade, and play in shallow water more than adults. For more information on the parasites' life cycle, click [here](#) and [here](#).

Symptoms:

- Significant tingling, itchy or burning skin
- Rash that presents as tiny pimples or blisters on surface of skin
- Symptoms may begin within minutes or can appear as long as two days after exposure to contaminated water.
- Sensitivity to swimmer's itch may increase with each exposure.

How is swimmer's itch treated?

Because swimmer's itch is the result of an allergic reaction, there is nothing you can do to get rid of the rash itself. The rash usually goes away within a week. You can try to relieve the itchiness by using some of these at-home remedies:

- Apply a [corticosteroid](#) cream to the affected area.
- Take an oral nonprescription [antihistamine like Benadryl](#).
- Make a paste with baking soda and water and apply it to the affected area.
- Apply a cool compress to the affected area.
- Use an anti-itch lotion (like calamine) on the affected area.
- Soak in a bath with colloidal oatmeal or Epsom salt.

How do I avoid swimmer's itch?

- **Choose swimming spots carefully.** Avoid being in lakes near the shore where swimmer's itch is a known problem or where signs have been posted

warning of the risk. Also, avoid marshy areas where snails are often found.

- **Rinse after swimming.** Rinse exposed skin with clean water immediately after leaving the water. Then dry the skin with a towel.

COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Deschutes County Public Health will continue weekly, scheduled vaccination appointments at our Courtney Drive location in Bend through the month of July. For more information, or to make an appointment, please click here visit our website www.deschutes.org.

Jefferson County Public Health offers COVID-19 vaccines every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9AM-4PM in the Public Health Clinic. (541) 475-4456

For information on vaccine in Crook County call 541-447-5165

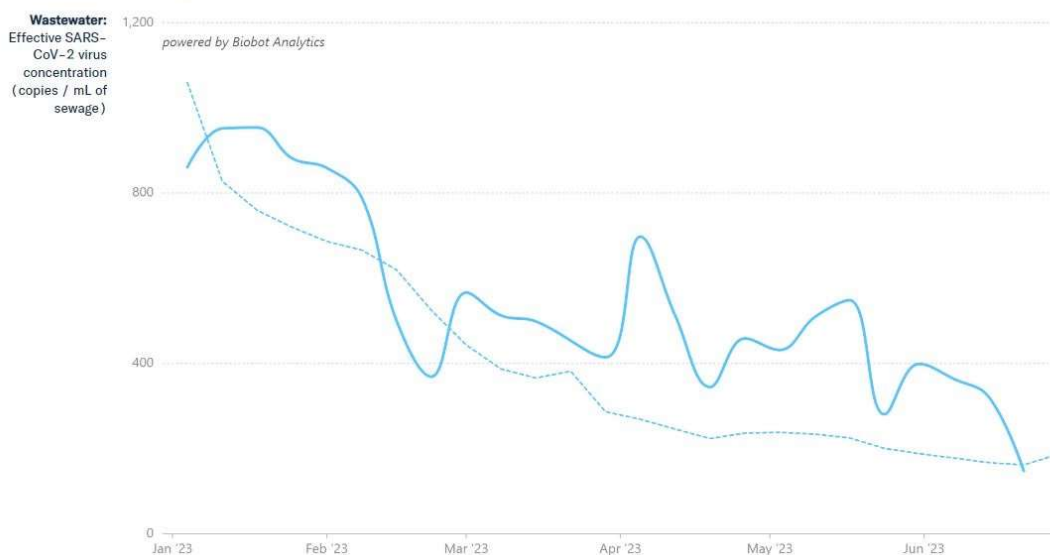
There are also pharmacy and urgent care options throughout our area: Find out more by clicking [here](#).

If you are having trouble locating a vaccine dose, you can reach out to us on the COVID-19 Hotline at 541-699-5109. Please leave a message and we will get back to you within 1 business day.

We anticipate information for Fall/Seasonal planning, regarding recommendations and availability for COVID-19 Vaccines from the FDA and CDC, to be public in the next few weeks. Please check back on our website later this summer for those updates.

COVID-19 Monitoring via Wastewater

Deschutes County, OR



Because labs are no longer required to report positive cases of SARS-CoV-2, the best method to determine the level of COVID-19 in our community is to [monitor wastewater](#). Other wastewater monitoring sites are [CDC](#) and [OHA](#). These sites use the same raw data, but display them in different ways.

As you can see by comparing the solid line (Deschutes County) and dotted line (US), on June 21, 2023, the concentration of virus present in Deschutes County's wastewater is slightly below the national reading.

Interestingly, 99% of the variants detected are in the XBB Omicron family. They are more contagious than the variants that caused the last wave in January 2021. Thankfully, they do not result in more serious illness. The latest booster works very well to protect against serious illness, long-COVID, and hospitalization.

Bottom line, if the wastewater signal is going up or continues to be elevated, vulnerable people should put on a well-fitting mask in public.

COVID-19 Telehealth Services

The Oregon Health Authority is still partnering with Color Health to offer free telehealth visits in Oregon for anyone dealing with COVID-19. No insurance is required and is available to people 12 and older. Consultations are confidential and offered in 17 languages.

Pregnant people and youth as young as 12 can now use Color Health's online or telephone support to get the COVID-19 antiviral medication, Paxlovid.

Eligible children ages 12-17 must have parental or adult caregiver consent to use the Color Health service.

Paxlovid is an antiviral pill for non-hospitalized patients, taken orally for five consecutive days. It is available by prescription to people age 12 and up infected with the COVID-19 virus who have conditions that put them at risk for severe illness.

To learn more, click [here](#).

Telehealth services for COVID-19 medication now available to pregnant people and youth 12+.

We've partnered with Color Health, Inc. to offer free telehealth visits and treatment for people in Oregon who need it. During the visit, you can find out if you are eligible for COVID-19 treatments.

To learn more, visit color.com/COVID-19-treatment-OR



Oregon
Health
Authority

What do YOU need to live healthy and well in Central Oregon?

Your input will be used to shape community health improvement planning and future funding invested in community health and well-being.

Tell us what you need to live healthy and well in Central Oregon!

Give us 10-minutes and enter a drawing to win:

- iPad
- Mac Mini
- \$100 gift card (to a grocery store of your choice)
- \$100 gift card (to a gas station of your choice)

7 winners randomly selected each month (3/23 through 9/23)



Scan QR code to take the survey
or visit:
cohealthsurvey.org



Seven prize winners are selected randomly each month through September 2023. Take the survey at cohealthsurvey.org. To learn more about Central Oregon Health Council, click [here](#).

Please let us know if you have any other health topics you would like to learn more about.

COVID-19 Hotline Hours

- Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Have a question after hours or on weekends? Leave a voicemail, we will respond within 1 business day.
- COVID-19 Hotline, 541-699-5109

Public Health Resources:

- County and Central Oregon web resources:
 - [Crook County](#)
 - [Deschutes County](#)
 - [Jefferson County](#)

Did someone forward this situation report to you? Click here to sign up to receive the report directly to your inbox.

This situation update was compiled by the Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson County Health Departments. It will be updated with state, national, and worldwide situation data and sent Monday through Friday.

Responses to this email address are not monitored.

To request this information in an alternate format, please call (541) 322-7444
or send an email to info@deschutes.org.

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Deschutes County | 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, OR 97703

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