

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Charlie Bermant, with with local news and commentary for Tuesday, June 22, 2021.

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Jefferson County began this week with one new case of COVID-19, a female in her 30s. This brings the case total to 443, with 28 people awaiting test results. During his regular weekly address to the County Board of Commissioners, Health Officer Dr. Tom Locke said that Jefferson County's infection rate has risen, with 22 cases reported in the last two weeks. Clusters of unvaccinated, unmasked people in indoor gatherings were affected or infected. Locke said these unmasked indoor gatherings are going to be "a pattern throughout the summer. When unvaccinated people get together, especially in indoor spaces, there is still a danger of COVID-19 transmission. So you still might want to wear a mask in certain situations, even if it is no longer required.

Locke said that vaccination rates in Jefferson County are still among the highest in the state. Of those eligible for the vaccine 12 and older, 72.3% have had at least one dose and almost 69% are fully vaccinated. Among those 65 and older, 86% are fully vaccinated. Vaccinations also are available at local pharmacies, Jefferson Healthcare (through the Express Clinic), and through your local physician. There are three pop-up events scheduled this week: Wednesday at the Tri-Area Food Bank, Friday at Sunrise Coffee in the Boat Haven, and Saturday at the Jefferson County Farmers Market. All accept appointments but also accommodate walk ins. For the specifics, call 360-344-9791 or visit the public health website ([www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/202/Public-Health](http://www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/202/Public-Health)).

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The Jefferson County Fair Board announced the cancellation of its in-person event last week, for the second year in a row and due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 fair, scheduled for its normal August 13 through August 15th weekend, will be virtual and occur on the fair's Facebook page and web site. There is still a hope for some in-person events, but their nature is as yet undetermined. A virtual fair is less fulfilling than the in-person version. The online iteration lacks curly fries, chicken bingo, and the unmistakable fair aroma. But the online fair still allows people to show off their accomplishments from the past year, and connect with other like-minded people. All entries are digital, achieved with a picture or video of the exhibit. There are the expected categories: Fine arts, photography, Home Arts Classes, floral arrangements, and small animals. But at least one category reflects the times: The PPE mask contest invites people to display their most creative preventive mask designs. The Virtual Fair's Premium Book and registration form are available at the fair office and – no surprise – online. For more information or to download the entry material got to [www.jeffcofairgrounds.com](http://www.jeffcofairgrounds.com).

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The damaged downtown traffic light at the corner of Water Street and Taylor Street will be flashing for a while longer, as the city was stymied in its effort to find a replacement fixture. The light has not changed since a motorist destroyed the mechanism in early May. According to Brian Reid, the city's operations manager, repeated calls and emails to the light's manufacturer, Sterling Lighting, went unanswered for several weeks before finally connecting with a referral to a vendor in Vancouver. A bid is in the works and is expected in the very near future, Reid said. He can't be any more specific about timing, as the manufacture, shipping, and installation durations are all up in the air. He is similarly vague about the cost, but definitively states they will be billed to the hapless motorist's insurance company.

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KPTZ 91.9 FM brings you local news at noon Monday through Saturday and at 5pm Monday through Thursday. You can contact us through [news@kptz.org](mailto:news@kptz.org).

This is Charlie Bermant. Thank you for listening.