



Contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email: apaul@co.linn.or.us

# Commissioners learn about influenza issues

ALBANY — Influenza was a factor in the deaths of two elderly Linn County residents in February, County Health Officer Dr. Adam Brady told the Board of Commissioners Tuesday morning.



Dr. Adam Brady

Brady's report comes as the Oregon Health Authority announced this week that the state's flu season is the worst

since it began tracking influenza 15 years ago.

Dr. Brady said the two people were more than 90 years old. He added that it is especially important that vulnerable populations — the elderly and the young — be vaccinated against influenza.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, it is not too late to get a flu shot as OHA officials said in a press release Oregon could see a "late-season uptick" in flu cases.

Oregon saw a spike in influenza cases in December, with 2,931 cases being reported at the end of the month. For the week ending March 8, OHA reported 539 cases. About 13.6% of influenza tests were positive for that same week.

OHA data also shows fewer people are getting flu shots, with vaccinations down 4% from last year and consistently decreasing since 2022.

Older adults, young children, pregnant people and people with certain health

conditions are at higher risk for complications from influenza.

The story is the same at the national level according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. During the 2024-25 flu season, there have been 41 million flu illnesses and 23,000 flu deaths.

In other health info, Dr. Brady said there were 96 deaths in Linn County in February. Tobacco use could be a factor in 28% of those deaths, diabetes could be a contributing factor in 10%, alcohol in 5% and non-prescription drug use, 2%.

There were three deaths of people who were more than 100 years old. There were no reported suicides.

Dr. Brady said there were 42 births — 21 male and 21 female.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Opened sealed bids for the 2025 road overlay projects: Low bidder was North Santiam Paving of Stayton at \$694,868.92. There were eight total bids, ranging up to \$954,398.88. The apparent low bid will be evaluated by the Road Department staff to ensure all bidding rules were followed and if so, staff will provide a "recommendation to award" to the Board of Commissioners for the actual award of the contracts.
- Were informed by Public Health Program Manager Shane Sanderson that there were 48 restaurant inspections in February and 428 year-to-date (July through February) compared to 197 the previous year.
- Approved a Student Affiliation

Agreement amendment between Southern New Hampshire University and Linn County Public Health. The amendment adds working with Public Health Master's Degree level students. Public Health Administrator Todd Noble said Linn County has 40 to 50 such agreements with various colleges and the program has been "wildly successful." He said students often return to Linn County to work after completing their college programs.

- Approved fire and rescue dispatch contracts for 2025-26 between the Linn County Sheriff's Office and the following agencies: City of Albany Fire Department; Brownsville Rural Fire; Halsey-Shedd Rural Fire; Harrisburg Fire and Rescue; Lebanon Fire and Ambulance District; Scio Rural Fire District; Sweet Home Fire and Ambulance District and Tangent Rural Fire District.
- Approved a contract with Larcell Mechanical of Albany to replace the heating system in the Santiam Building at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center. The project will include installation of two, 25-ton ground-mounted heating/air conditioning units. Fair & Expo Manager Kris Barnes said the project will add air conditioning to 20,000 square feet of space. The contract is for \$161,990.
- Approved increasing the Fair Fund by \$70,500 to allow for payments in June for entertainers for the 2025 Linn County Fair in July.

Media contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).