

# OPEN SAFE OREGON

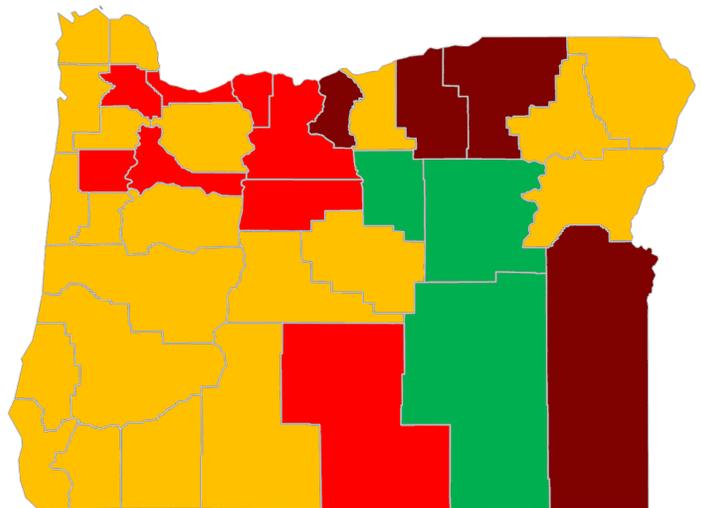


Are Counties effectively containing the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”)?  
Trends and risk assessment report for July 23, 2020



OSPIRG has been tracking critical public health metrics around the containment of COVID-19 in Oregon, building on the work of [COVID Exit Strategy](#), a group of national public health and crisis experts. Currently, Oregon is rated “Yellow” overall - while Oregon has fared better against the coronavirus than many states, so far, keeping it that way will require quick intervention to avoid spiraling out of control.

This fact sheet uses a color scale (below) to show how Oregon’s 36 counties are performing against benchmarks for containment, COVID testing, and contact tracing over the last week. This week, we began factoring contact tracing success rates into our grade, resulting in many more counties moving into “yellow” status - reflecting statewide failures.



**Counties in this category are currently *meeting* containment benchmarks.**

**Counties in this category should maintain all current restrictions.**

**Counties in both the “Red” and “Critical” categories are failing critical containment benchmarks and should be locked down for at least 2 weeks.**

**GREEN**

**YELLOW**

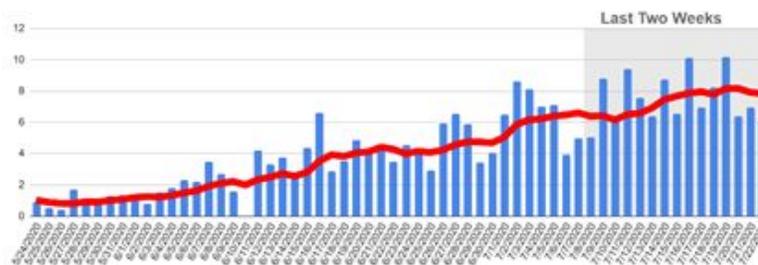
**RED**

**CRITICAL**

**BENCHMARK 1: Daily COVID+**

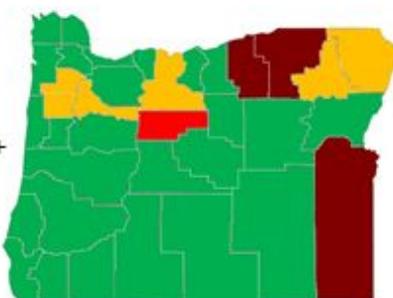
The first benchmark we are tracking is the 7-day moving average for daily COVID diagnoses per 100,000 population. To contain COVID-19, a community should try to keep this number below 3. Grades are assigned based on the scale below, derived from the work of COVID Exit Strategy.

Oregon - Daily cases per 100,000 population over 60 days

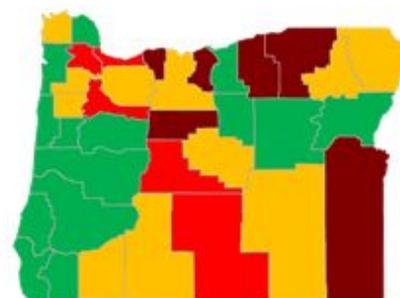


**Benchmark 1: all counties**

This map shows the grades of all 36 Oregon Counties on benchmark 1 – containment, measured by daily COVID+ cases reported per 100,000 population, averaged over the last 7 days (7/15-7/22). This week, we moved the threshold for “Red” and “Critical / Failing” counties down to match our national partner, COVID Exit Strategy.



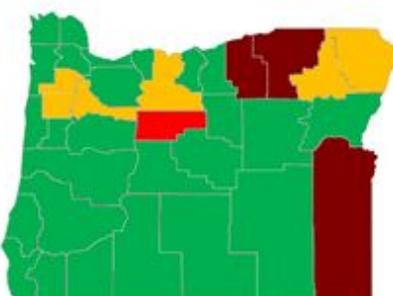
**Last Week**



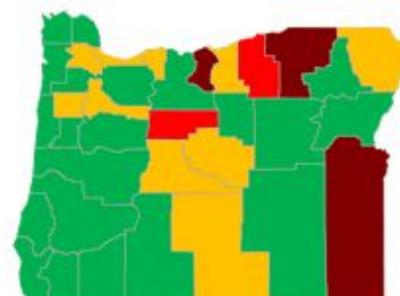
**This Week**

**Benchmark 2: all counties**

This map shows the grades of all 36 Oregon Counties on benchmark 2 – testing adequacy, measured by the percentage of COVID tests returned positive daily. We use an averaged figure reported by the OHA each Thursday. Current data reflects testing between 7/12 and 7/18.



**Last Week**



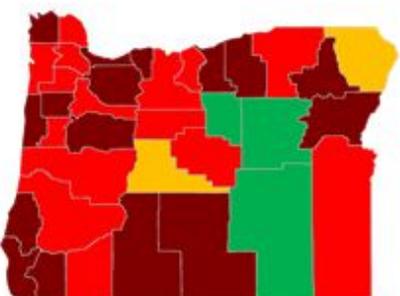
**This Week**

**Benchmark 3: all counties**

This map shows the grades of all 36 Oregon Counties on benchmark 3 – contact tracing, measured by the percentage of COVID cases that could not be traced back to a known source. We use a figure reported by the OHA each Thursday. Current data reflects tracing for cases between 7/12 and 7/18.



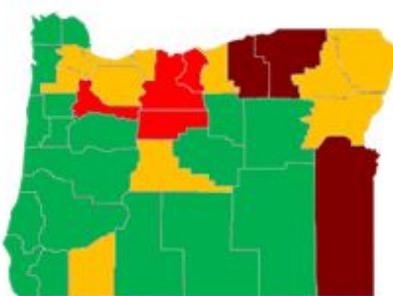
**Last Week**



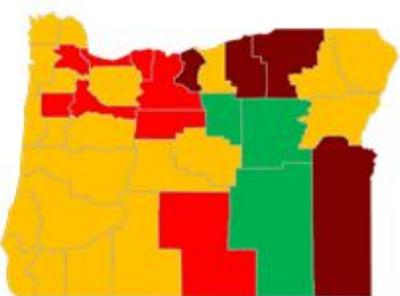
**This Week**

**Overall Grades for OR Counties**

These maps show the overall grades for all 36 counties. We began using an averaged grade for all three benchmarks this week. This change does not change recommendations for most counties, but it does move Polk into “Red,” and many counties into “Yellow.” This reflects the statewide failure of counties to meet the state’s contact tracing goals, as reported by the OHA each week.



**Last Week**



**This Week**

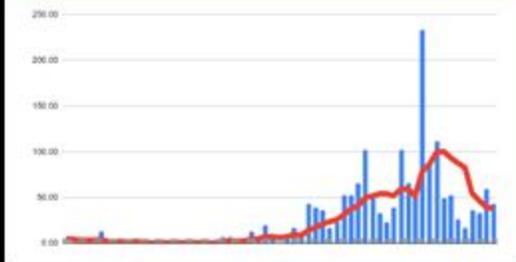
**CRITICAL COUNTIES (Alphabetical)**

**Malheur County**

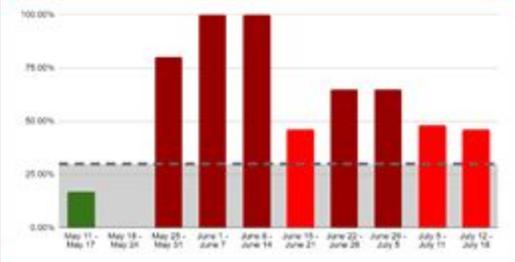
**Cases: 38/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced : 46%**



**19.3%**

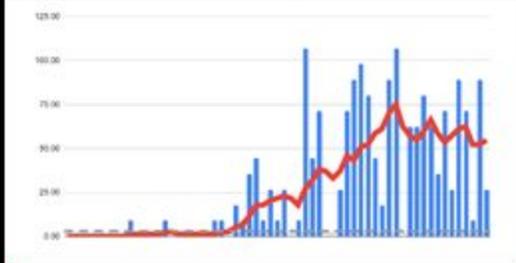


**Morrow County**

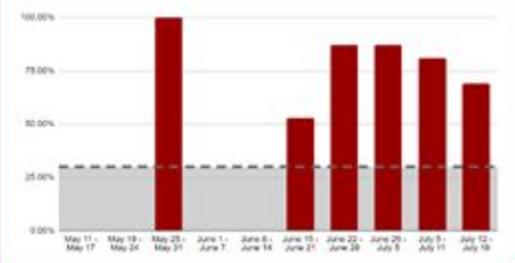
**Cases: 55/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced : 69%**



**14.4%**



**Sherman County**

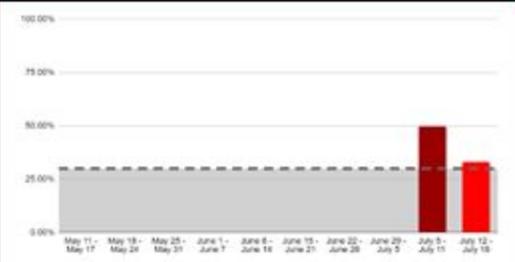
**Cases: 27/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced : 33%**



**16.7%**

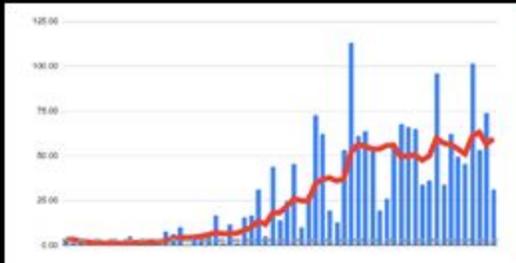


**Umatilla County**

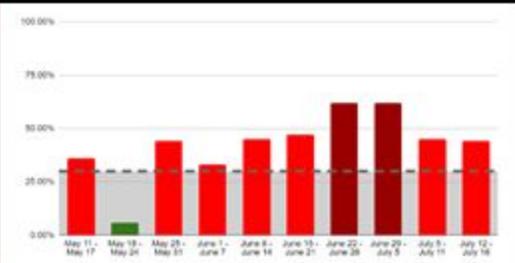
**Cases: 60/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced : 44%**



**17%**



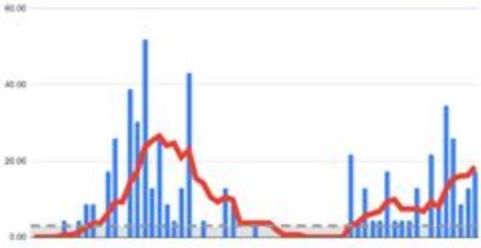
**RED COUNTIES (Alphabetical)**

**Hood River County**

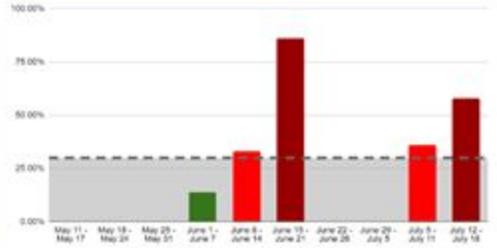
**Cases: 19/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 58%**



**5.8%**

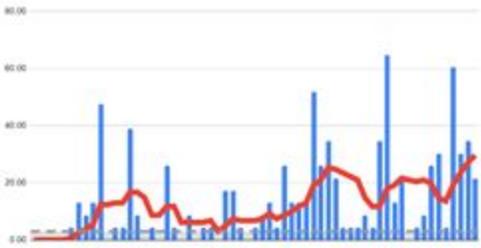


**Jefferson County**

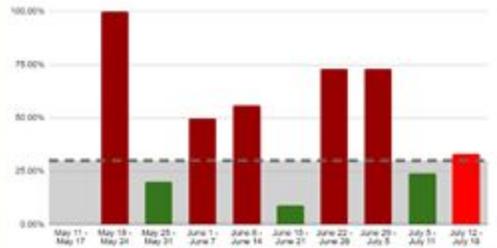
**Cases: 30/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced : 33%**



**11.4%**

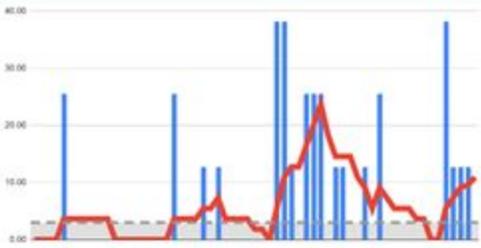


**Lake County**

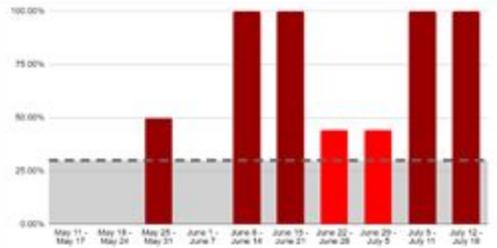
**Cases: 11/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 100%**



**5.6%**



**Marion County**

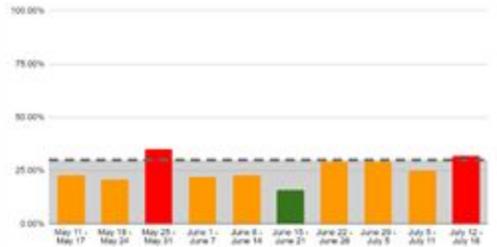
**Cases: 11/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced : 32%**



**7.9%**





**YELLOW COUNTIES (Alphabetical)**

**Baker County**

**Cases: 3/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 100%**



**1.2%**

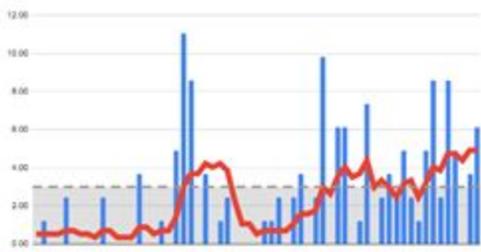


**Benton County**

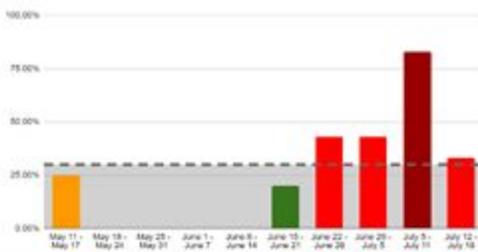
**Cases: 2/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 33%**



**2.2%**

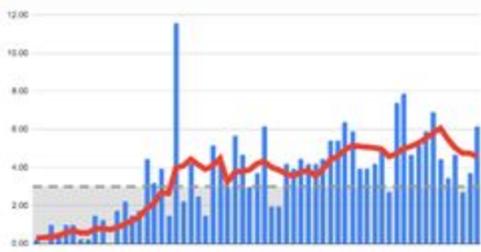


**Clackamas County**

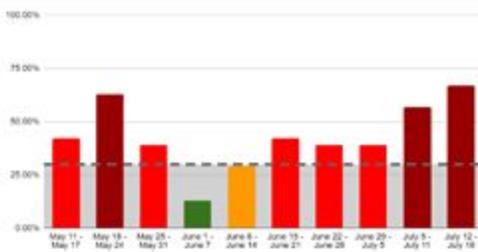
**Cases: 5/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 67%**



**3.4%**

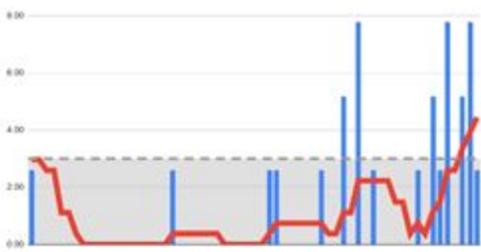


**Clatsop County**

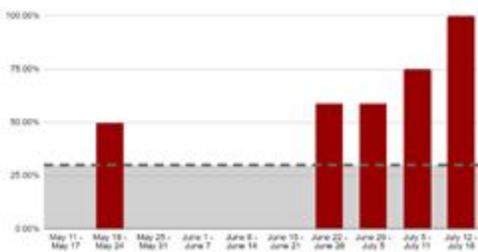
**Cases: 4/100k**

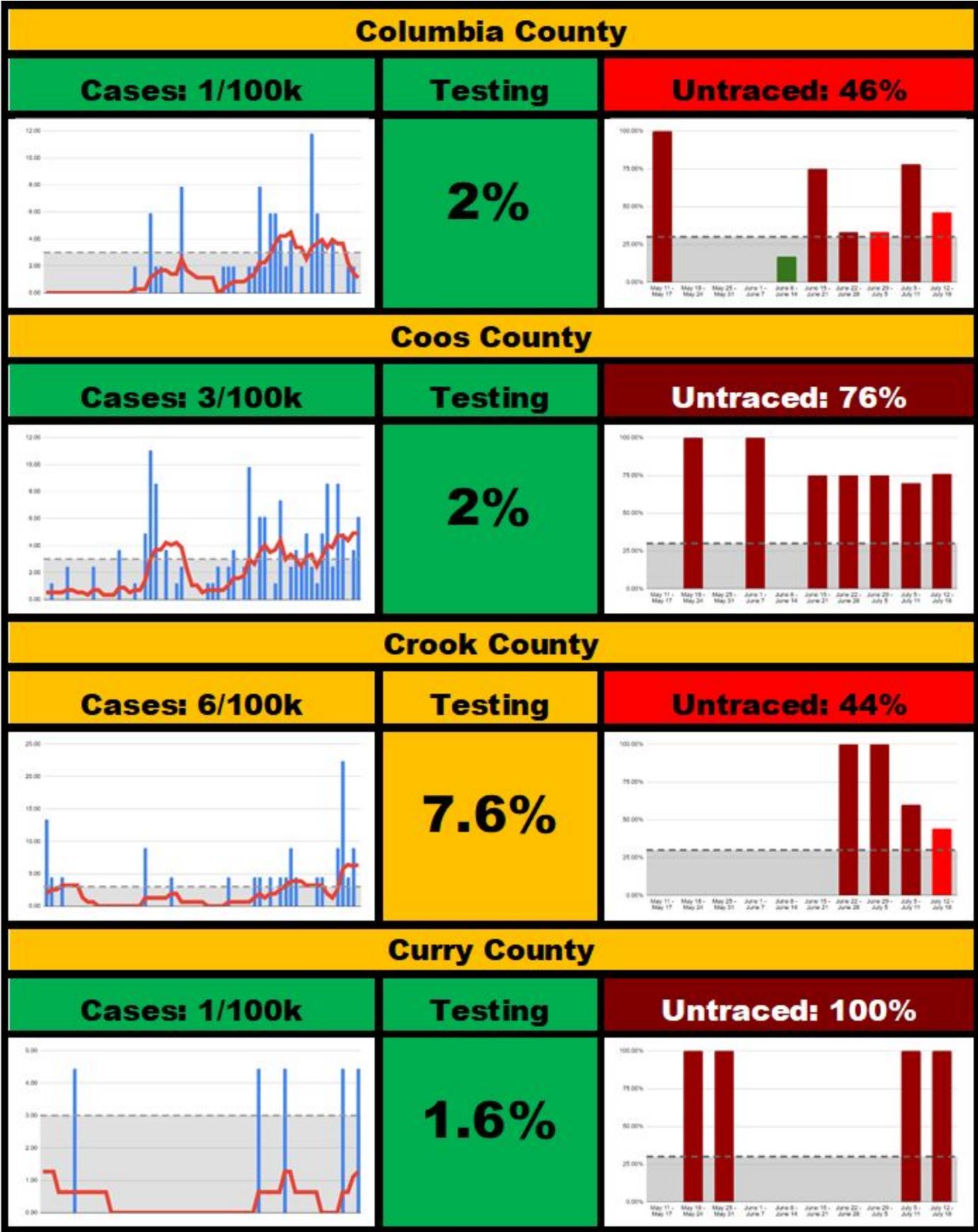
**Testing**

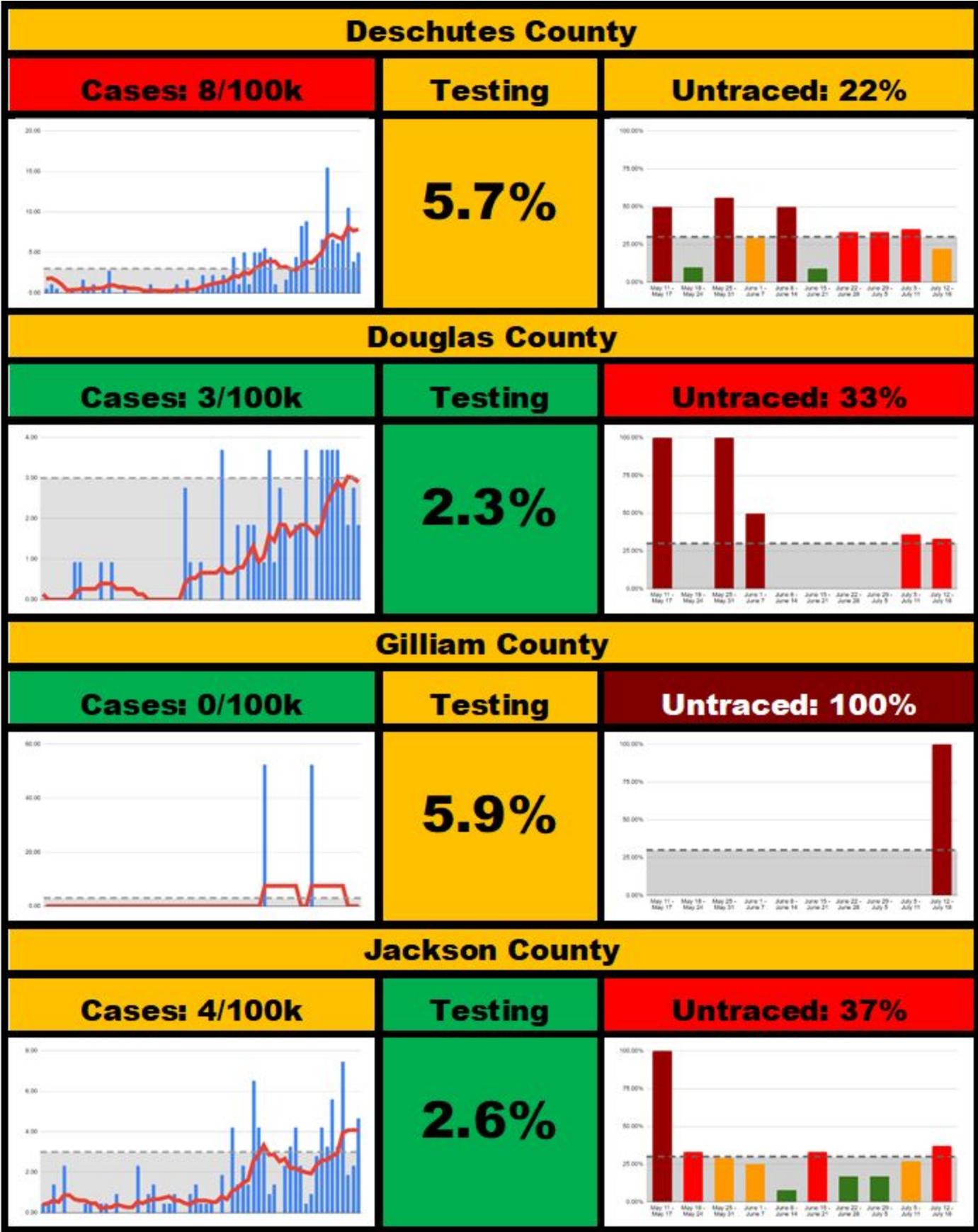
**Untraced: 100%**



**2%**







**Josephine County**

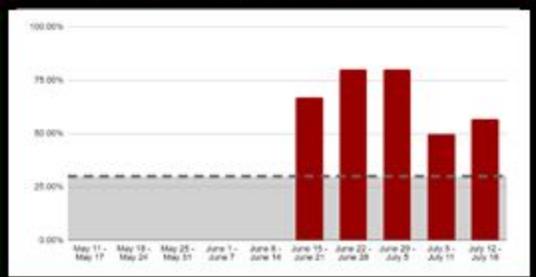
**Cases: 2/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 57%**



**1.5%**

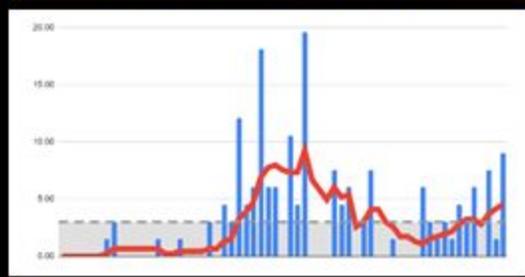


**Klamath County**

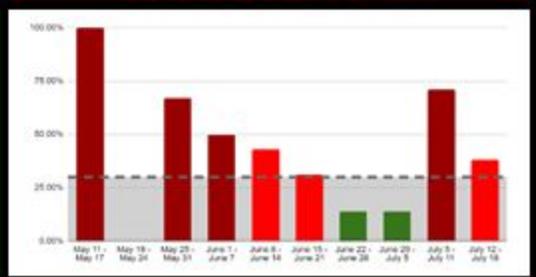
**Cases: 5/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 38%**



**1.6%**

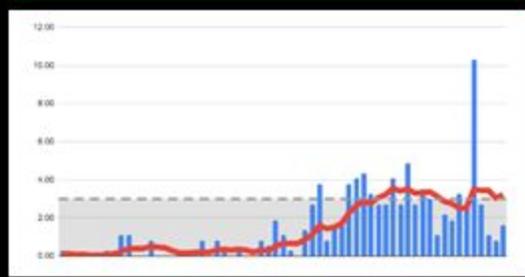


**Lane County**

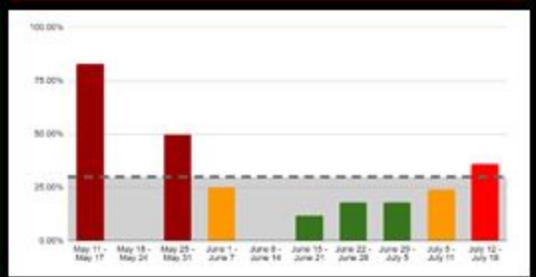
**Cases: 3/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 36%**



**1.6%**

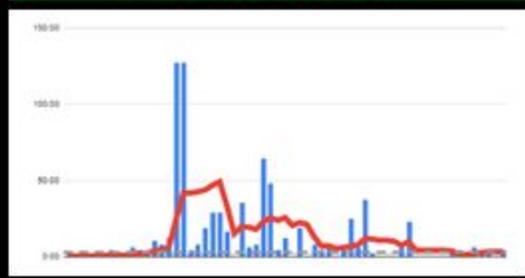


**Lincoln County**

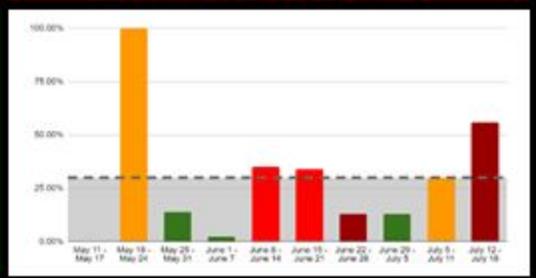
**Cases: 3/100k**

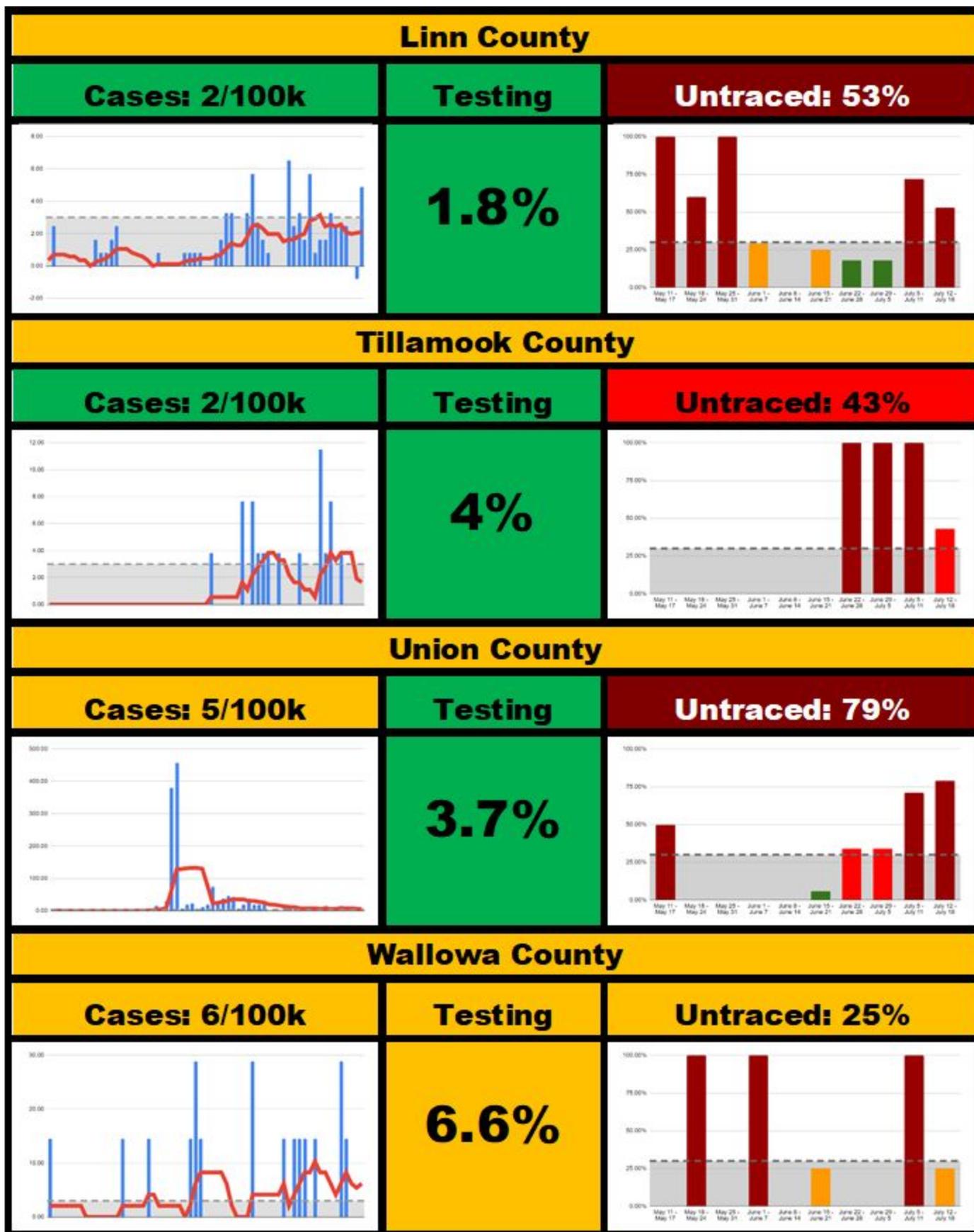
**Testing**

**Untraced: 56%**



**1.9%**



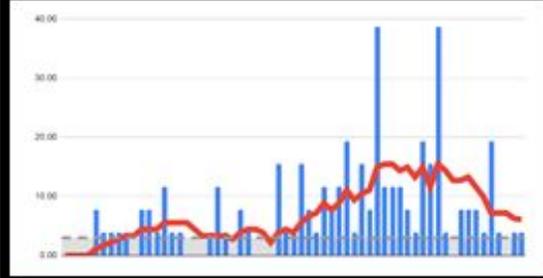


**Wasco County**

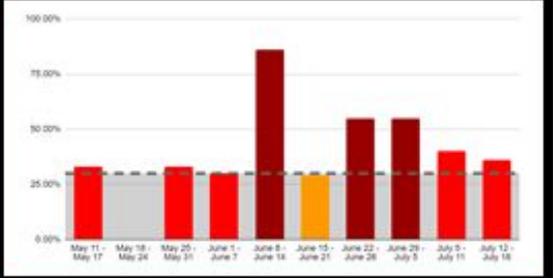
**Cases: 6/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 36%**



**3.44%**



**Yamhill County**

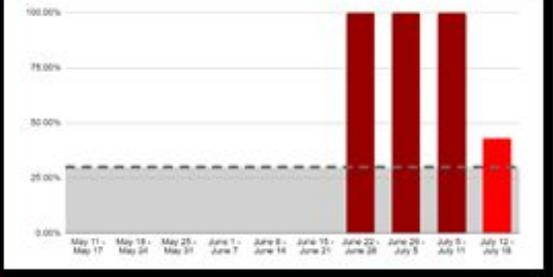
**Cases: 5/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: 47%**



**3.2%**



**GREEN COUNTIES (Alphabetical)**

**Grant County**

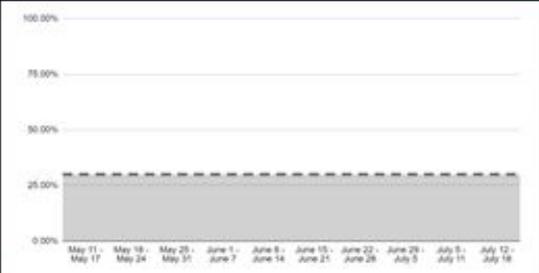
**Cases: 2/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: N/A**



**0%**



**Harney County**

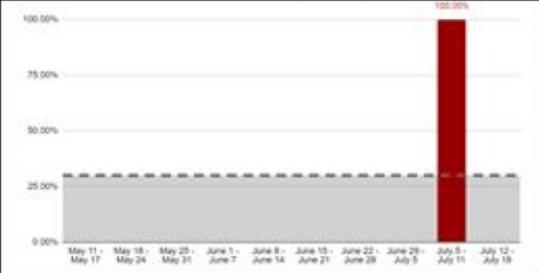
**Cases: 6/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: N/A**



**4.2%**



**Sherman County**

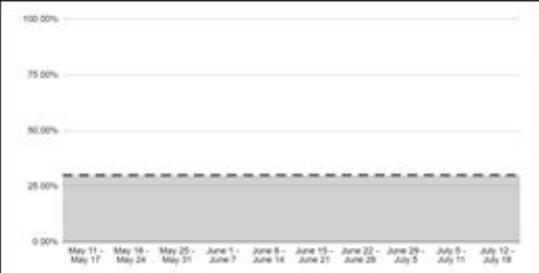
**Cases: 0/100k**

**Testing**

**Untraced: N/A**



**0%**



## Policy Recommendations

### CRITICAL Counties

Counties in both of these categories are badly failing at least one benchmark, and in most cases, multiple benchmarks. A high rate of untraced cases indicates that a county's contact tracing efforts are already failing. A high rate of test positivity indicates that a county is missing too many infections to effectively trace contacts. A high per capita case count indicates that the virus is extremely widespread.

### RED Counties

This means a stay-at-home order is probably necessary to bring infections to a manageable level. OSPIRG recommends implementation of a full lockdown in these counties for at least 2 weeks – including closures of all non-essential businesses, stay-at-home guidance, and deployment of additional state resources to assist with physical distancing and face covering requirements in essential businesses.

### YELLOW Counties

Counties in the "Yellow" category are still failing at least one benchmark, but are close to the threshold – meaning it may be possible to bring the outbreaks in these communities under control through a test & trace strategy. OSPIRG recommends that these counties maintain all current public health interventions, and be prepared to take additional steps if daily cases rise any further.

### GREEN Counties

Counties in the "Green" category are currently meeting or close to meeting all three benchmarks. If infections remain at current levels in these communities, they should be able to effectively respond to COVID-19 through a test & trace strategy.

## Statewide Policy Recommendations

- Inconsistent application of the principles in Governor Brown's "Building a Safe & Strong Oregon" plan have left county governments, businesses, and consumers guessing as to what comes next. The state should define clear benchmarks for placing additional containment measures on poorly performing counties, and apply them consistently across the state.
- Other states, including California, New York, Texas, and Florida, have recognized that some types of business, especially bars and indoor dining rooms, cannot be operated safely with current levels of community spread for COVID-19. Without an interstate travel ban or robust quarantine procedures at Oregon's borders, bars and indoor dining rooms should be shuttered throughout the state until the virus is brought under control nationwide.
- The virus doesn't care whether an indoor gathering is a book club, a fraternity party, or a church service. Restrictions on the size of gatherings should be applied uniformly across all types of indoor activity.

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## NOTES AND CITATIONS

- Cover photo Credit: Skeeze, from [www.Pixabay.com](http://www.Pixabay.com).
- Color ratings for case positivity & testing capacity adapted from COVID Exit Strategy, [www.covidexitstrategy.org](http://www.covidexitstrategy.org).
- Map graphic from Free Vector Maps, [www.freevectormaps.com](http://www.freevectormaps.com).
- Data for daily COVID+ by county from USA Facts, at <https://usafacts.org/visualizations/coronavirus-covid-19-spread-map/>.
- Per capita case counts calculated using 2019 US census projections for Oregon counties. [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).
- Policy recommendations are derived from Key Metrics for COVID Suppression, released by Harvard Global Health Institute. URL: [https://ethics.harvard.edu/files/center-for-ethics/files/key\\_metrics\\_and\\_indicators\\_v4.pdf](https://ethics.harvard.edu/files/center-for-ethics/files/key_metrics_and_indicators_v4.pdf)
- County level testing data and sporadic case rate from Oregon Health Authority: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/oregon.health.authority.covid.19#!/vizhome/OregonCOVID-19PublicHealthIndicators/COVID-19Burden>.
- A county's overall grade is calculated through an unweighted average of our three metrics. Each metric is assigned an integer value between 1 and 4 (1=green, 2=yellow, 3=red, 4=failing), and the average of a county's scores is rounded to the nearest whole number, and the corresponding color grade overall.