

# BUSINESS

*An ill wind blows for business*

## Storm gives workers a timeout

■ As lights flicker, and windows rattle, many area employers give their crews the rest of the day off but expect work will return to normal on Wednesday

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*of The Oregonian staff*

Portland-area businesses turned their bravest face to the storm Tuesday morning. But by noon, as winds began rattling office windows and battering factory walls, many told their workers to head home.

"We're closing," Shelley Marchesi, a spokeswoman for Tektronix Inc. in Wilsonville, said about 12:40 p.m. "We're just concerned for employees' safety."

Downtown and throughout the Portland suburbs, workers at big employers such as Hewlett-Packard, Nike and Sequent Computer Systems reported beginning their morning as usual.

But by lunchtime, the commute home was in full swing. Some companies closed, while others let their employees decide for themselves whether to continue working.

"We've lost power twice," said one worker at Hewlett-Packard's printer plant in Camas, Wash. "I think people are taking that as a hint to go home."

Inside the **First Interstate** Bank Tower, the message was direct: About 2 p.m., the bank's public-address system told employees that they were "encouraged to leave the building."

"We wanted people to have a clear understanding of what the problems would be without being alarmist," said **Susan Thomas**, a bank spokeswoman. "There are projects on their desk that could be important, but it's more important to get home to your family safely."

As large windows in his downtown Portland office shook in the wind, bond broker Jeff Hanna of Seattle Northwest Securities Corp. wasn't thinking about the market.

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