

Guidance for Handling Dead Bird Calls and Concerns about Avian Influenza

For inquiries from concerned citizens about possible testing of dead birds for [avian influenza](#), please follow these guidelines:

- A. Calls about **domestic poultry**, refer to the [Washington State Department of Agriculture \(WSDA\), Avian Health Program](#) at 1-800-606-3056.
- B. Calls about **wild birds**, refer to the [Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife \(WDFW\), Dead Bird Reports Line](#) at 1-800-606-8768 of:
 - Die-offs of multiple wild birds (five or more sick or dead birds at one time in one location of any species), and
 - Single raptors, including owls. In some cases, the bird may be tested for both avian influenza and WNV.
- C. Fewer than five **wild birds** excluding raptors, do not refer.
 - Note for WNV surveillance, however, DOH encourages callers to report dead birds (preferably crows, jays, ravens, magpies, and hawks) online at [DOH WNV Report a Dead Bird](#). The local health jurisdiction receiving the call may wish to complete the online report form for the caller.

Die-offs of five or more wild birds can be reported to WDFW via the DOH online dead bird reporting form. These reports automatically route to their agency.

Online reports automatically route to corresponding local health jurisdictions that are participating in WNV bird surveillance. Reports are also tracked by [DOH WNV bird surveillance map](#) application. WNV bird testing will be limited, targeting areas of unusual increases or clusters of sightings based upon the WNV bird surveillance map.

Personal Protection Equipment

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) provides an *Interim Guidance for Surveillance for WNV and/or Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza Virus* with information on personal protection and other bird surveillance topics. See West Nile Virus in the United States: Guidelines for Surveillance, Prevention, and Control in Appendix 3 (<http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/resources/pdfs/wnvGuidelines.pdf>). Follow CDC's personal protection guidelines when collecting and disposing of dead birds. Avoid bare-handed contact with dead birds. Use disposable impermeable gloves to pick up the carcass. If gloves are not available, use an inverted double-plastic bag technique for picking up the carcass or use a shovel to scoop it into a plastic bag. If disposing of the bird, wrap in double plastic bags and place in a garbage can that is secured from access by children and animals. When done, discard or disinfect gloves if used and wash hands with soap and water.

Questions: [DOH Zoonotic Disease Program contacts](#)

This interim guidance is subject to change as new information becomes available.