

Guidance for handling dead birds calls and concerns about Avian Influenza

West Nile Virus (WNV) monitoring will continue this year in the same manner as previous years. For inquiries from concerned citizens who want to know if a dead bird(s) should be tested for **Avian Influenza**, please follow these guidelines:

- A. Calls about domestic poultry should be referred to Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), Avian Health Program. The caller can contact WSDA directly at: 1-800-606-3056.
- B. Calls about wild birds should be handled as follows:
 1. If it is a waterfowl or other aquatic species, refer the caller to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Dead Bird Reporting Line: 1-800-606-8768.
 2. If it is a raptor, excluding owls, WDFW would like to be notified. In some cases, avian influenza and WNV testing may both be performed. Call the WDFW Dead Bird Reporting Line: 1-800-606-8768.
 3. If it is NOT a waterfowl, or other aquatic species, or raptor:
 - a. Three or more sick or dead birds at one time in one location of any species? Refer to the WDFW Dead Bird Reporting Line: 1-800-606-8768.
 - b. Fewer than three birds? Do not refer. Local health may decide whether or not the bird(s) should be tested for WNV or should simply be disposed of.
- C. A central state dead bird reporting system is in effect:

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) has activated a toll free Avian Health Reporting Line (1-800-606-3056) for diseased or dead poultry. The line directs callers to WSDA for domestic poultry and to WDFW for wild birds. For WNV testing, the recording refers the caller to their local health department and to the DOH WNV hotline number (1-866-788-4787).

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). Current personal protection guidelines are still in effect. The bird should be collected or disposed of using current personal protection guidelines. Avoid bare-handed contact with dead birds. Use a shovel or rubber gloves while handling the bird for WNV testing or disposal. If rubber gloves are not available, use double plastic bags to protect hands. If disposing of the bird, wrap in double plastic bags and place in the garbage. When finished, wash hands with soap and water.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently provided 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. A link to the guidance is provided on the DOH WNV web site at:

www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/Zoo/WNV/LocalHealth.html

or you can go directly to the document at:

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/resources/Interimguidance_WNV_HPAI_bird_surveillance_082206.pdf

Avian Influenza Interagency Work Group

The Department of Agriculture is the lead state agency for preparedness and response to avian influenza in domestic poultry. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is the lead state agency for preparedness for avian influenza in wild birds. Staff from the Washington Departments of Health, Agriculture, and Fish and Wildlife participate with other state agencies, local health, and other organizations to share information and monitor the current status of avian influenza in Washington, North America and worldwide.

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

Questions?

Contact the Washington Department of Health Zoonotic Disease Program

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