



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Health Starts Here

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Burlington County Health Officials Announce Positive Test for Bird Flu

The Burlington County Health Department announced today that laboratory testing conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on dead geese recovered in Hainesport have returned presumptive positive findings of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, also known as bird flu.

The testing was done by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on several of the dead wild geese found in Hainesport on Feb. 17. Additional testing will be done at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory to provide further confirmation.

No additional testing is expected on any other dead birds discovered in Burlington County, and New Jersey Department of Health and New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife officials are attributing hundreds of bird deaths across the region to bird flu.

The respiratory disease is highly contagious among wild birds, especially waterfowl, raptors and vultures. It typically spreads through nasal and eye secretions and avian manure. Other animals can also contract the disease, however, health officials stress it is primarily an animal health issue and the risk to humans is low.

Humans with close or prolonged contact with infected animals can become infected, but the virus is not known to be transmitted from human to human at this time.

People should not have any unprotected contact with sick or dead birds. Residents who see dead or sick wild birds on public or private property should report them to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection using the Wild Bird Disease Reporting Form: <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/> .

Residents are advised to avoid direct contact with birds, meaning minimizing unnecessary handling of live or dead birds in public places, including feeding or touching wildlife, to reduce the risk of bird flu exposure. If a dead bird must be removed from private property, residents may dispose of it safely by wearing gloves and using a shovel and then washing hands thoroughly afterward. The bird should be triple-bagged and disposed of in accordance to the [guidance issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection](#).

Special attention should also be paid to keep children and pets away from wild birds and bird droppings.

Residents are encouraged to review avian flu information and guidance on the County Health Department website and follow all recommended precautions. The webpage is at <https://www.co.burlington.nj.us/2115/H5N1-Bird-Flu> . Information is also posted in County parks.