

# What there is to know about Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a neurological disease in deer, elk, moose and other members of the deer family, known as "cervids." The disease was first recognized in 1967 in captive mule deer in Colorado, and has since been documented in captive and free-ranging deer in states and two Canadian Provinces. The first case of CWD in Texas was discovered in 2012 in free-ranging mule deer in an isolated area of far West Texas.

This disease presents numerous challenges for state wildlife agencies across North America. Of concern is the potential for decline within deer, elk, or other susceptible cervid populations. In addition, CWD could have indirect impacts on hunting, hunter participation, and economic benefits derived from big game hunting. In Texas, hunting is a \$2.2 billion economic engine, supporting many rural towns across the state.

Because eradication is thought to be impossible once CWD becomes established in a population, it is imperative that a sound CWD management program is established to reduce the severity of implications resulting from the disease. Of course, disease prevention is the best approach to protect cervid populations and prevent social and economic repercussions. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) have developed a cooperative CWD management plan to guide both agencies in addressing risks, developing management strategies, and protecting big game resources

from CWD in captive or free-ranging cervid populations.

## **CWD Management and Regulations for Hunters Mandatory CWD Testing Requirements**

Hunters who harvest mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, red deer, or other CWD susceptible species within the Trans-Pecos, Panhandle, and South-Central Texas CWD Containment and Surveillance Zones are **REQUIRED** to bring their animals to a TPWD check station within 48 hours of harvest. TPWD urges voluntary sampling of hunter harvested deer outside of the CWD zones. Hunters interested in providing voluntary samples can contact their local

TPWD biologist or bring their animals to any of the check stations located around the state. If bringing a quartered animal and the associated head to a check station, be sure to remove the head from the carcass 2 to 3 vertebrae below the head to ensure that the appropriate tissues for CWD testing are not damaged. Hunters should keep heads cool but not frozen. Rules also impose restriction of permitted live-deer movements to and from CWD zones. The rules are part of the state's comprehensive CWD management plan to contain the disease to the areas where it is known to exist.

Hunters are encouraged to

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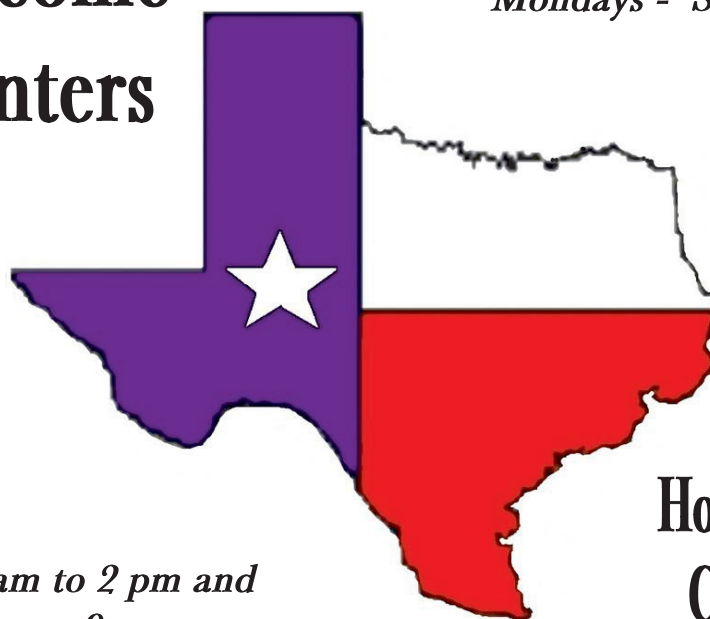
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