

Chronic Wasting Disease discovered at deer breeding facility

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been discovered in a 5 1/2-year-old white-tailed deer in a Kimble County deer breeding facility, marking the first positive detection of the disease in the county.

The tissue samples submitted by the breeding facility as part of routine deer mortality surveillance revealed the presence of CWD during testing at the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) in College Station Feb. 6. The National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, confirmed the findings on Wednesday, February 26.

Officials have taken immediate action to secure all cervids at the Kimble County deer breeding facility with plans to conduct additional investigation for CWD. In addition, those breeding facilities that have received deer from the Kimble County facility or shipped deer to that facility during the last five years are under movement restrictions and cannot move or release cervids at this time, or they have completed the necessary testing to ensure that CWD was not transferred to their facility.

"The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is working

in coordination with the Texas Animal Health Commission and other agencies to launch an epidemiological investigation to determine the extent of the disease, assess risks to Texas' free ranging deer and protect the captive deer breeding industry," said Dr. Bob Dittmar, TPWD wildlife veterinarian. "We want to thank landowners and the Texas hunting community for its strong support of our detection, sampling and herd management efforts - we cannot combat the spread of CWD without it."

Although animal health and wildlife officials cannot say how long or to what extent the disease has been present in the Kimble County deer breeding facility, the breeder has had an active CWD surveillance program since 2011 with no positives detected until now.

"TAHC is working with TPWD to quickly assess and determine the extent of diseases prevalence in the herd and mitigate the spread of CWD," said Dr. Susan Rollo, TAHC State Epidemiologist.

The disease was first recognized in 1967 in captive mule deer in Colorado. CWD has also been documented in captive and/or free-ranging deer in 26 states and 3 Canadian provinces.



Tournament Champions! The Robert Lee High School Lady Steers golf team won their hometown tournament on Monday, March 2, 2020, with Jade Arens earning the third place medal.

In Texas, the disease was first discovered in 2012 in free-ranging mule deer along a remote area of the Hueco Mountains near the Texas-New Mexico border, and has since been detected in 169 white-tailed deer, red deer and mule deer in Dallam, El Paso, Hartley, Hudspeth, Kimble, Lavaca, Medina, Uvalde and Val Verde counties, 129 of which are connected to deer breeding facilities and release sites.

CWD among cervids is a progressive, fatal neurological disease that commonly results in altered behavior as a result of microscopic changes made to the brain of affected animals. An animal may carry the disease for years without outward indication, but in the latter stages, signs may include listlessness, lowering of the head, weight loss, repetitive walking in set patterns, and a lack

of responsiveness. To date there is no evidence that CWD poses a risk to humans or non-cervids. However, as a precaution, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization recommend not to consume meat from infected animals.

For more information about CWD, visit the TPWD web site or the TAHC web site.

Information on Coronavirus Disease 2019 from Texas Health & Human Services

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is working closely with CDC in monitoring the developing outbreak. This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available. Check dshs.texas.gov often for the latest details and what Texans need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

How does COVID-19 spread?

Current understanding about how the virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:

Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).

Via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Some spread might be possible before

people show symptoms; there have been reports of this with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Early on, many of the patients in the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China had some link to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. However, it is now clear that person-to-person

spread is occurring. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with COVID-19, and investigations are ongoing.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

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