

ZOONOTIC AND OTHER ANIMAL DISEASES OF CONCERN IN MARYLAND

For questions regarding specific disease events, please contact the lead agency noted. This contact information is for use by Maryland veterinarians and health professionals:

MDA - Maryland Department of Agriculture: ahops.mda@maryland.gov, 410-841-5810

MDH - Maryland Department of Health, Center for Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases: mdh.czvbd@maryland.gov, 410-767-5649

MD DNR - Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Fish & Wildlife Health Program, 877-463-6497

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) receives reports of wildlife disease cases via the 24/7 toll-free MD Natural Resources Police Call Center:

1-800-628-9944, the USDA/MD DNR Call Center: 1-877-463-6497, or the MD DNR Wildlife & Heritage Service office in Annapolis 1-410-260-8540.

*******IMPORTANT UPDATE******* *Maryland Request for Rabies Vaccination Delay*

As of **June 1st, 2023**, all requests for rabies vaccination delay must be submitted electronically via the online form available at: <https://www.cognitofrms.com/MDH3/MarylandRequestForRabiesVaccinationDelay>.

Extension of Temporary Suspension of Dogs Entering the United States from Countries with a High Risk of Rabies

CDC is extending its temporary suspension of dog importation from high-risk dog rabies countries until July 31, 2024. The extension of the temporary suspension of the importation of dogs into the United States from dog-maintained rabies virus variant (DMRVV) high-risk countries will be implemented on August 1, 2023, when the current suspension expires, and will remain in effect through July 31, 2024. For more information, visit the CDC webpage [Bringing a Dog into the United States | Bringing an Animal into U.S. | Importation | CDC](#)

On July 10, 2023, HHS and CDC published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to begin the process of updating these regulations. The NPRM is intended to solicit public comment and feedback on the issue of dog importations and CDC's proposal to inform the requirements of a final rule. Please see [Federal Register: Public Inspection: Control of Communicable Diseases; Foreign Quarantine: Importation of Dogs and Cats](#) for more information.

CDC's dog import pages have been updated with information on the extension and contain links to the Federal Register Notice.

Animal Safety Alert: Toxic Algal Mats in the Potomac River

An Animal Safety Alert was issued on July 7, 2023 by the Office of the State Veterinarian for the non-tidal Potomac River due to toxic algal mats. These harmful algae are native to the Chesapeake Bay and occur in higher abundances mostly

To report cases of disease in:	Contact:
Domestic animals	MDA Animal Health Program Office 410-841-5810 http://mda.maryland.gov/animalHealth/Pages/Diseases.aspx
Humans	MDH Center for Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases 410-767-5649 https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CZVBD/pages/Home.aspx
Wildlife	MD DNR/USDA Call Center 877-463-6497 https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/default.aspx

ZOONOTIC AND OTHER ANIMAL DISEASES OF CONCERN IN MARYLAND

Animal Safety Alert: Toxic Algal Mats in the Potomac River (continued)

during low flow, high temperatures and when specific nutrient levels are present. Toxic algae mats are currently located in the Potomac River in the area from Edwards Ferry to Great Falls, Montgomery County.

Anatoxin was detected at higher levels than seen before. These toxins can be quickly absorbed when ingested and are harmful to animals. Potential signs in dogs include tremors, muscle rigidity, paralysis, convulsions, coma, cyanosis, hypersalivation and/or death.

It is advised that animal contact with algal mats that have washed up on the shoreline should be avoided.



Images of Algal Mats Recently Reported in the Potomac River

Recommendations:

1. Livestock should be kept away from algal mats and kept out of the river.
2. Dog owners are advised to keep pets on leash, prevent them from eating algal mats (in water or on shore), wash them after being in affected areas, give fresh water to drink and contact your veterinarian if signs are noted.
3. Veterinarians are asked to report any incidents of dogs associated with ingestion of toxic algal mats to the Office of the Maryland State Veterinarian by emailing animalhealth.mda@maryland.gov or calling 410-841-5810, and
4. Post the CDC animal safety alert flyer in your office to help inform the public of this hazard - https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/algal_bloom_tall_card.pdf

For more information, visit:

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) - [Harmful Algal Blooms](#)

National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - [What is a harmful algal bloom?](#)

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)- [Veterinarian Reference for Cyanobacterial Blooms](#)

[Protect Yourself and Your Pets](#)

[Cyanobacteria Blooms FAQs](#)

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - [Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Blooms \(CyanoHABs\) in Water Bodies](#)

Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) - <https://mda.maryland.gov/AnimalHealth/pages/default.aspx>

Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) - [Harmful Algal Blooms](#)

Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) - [Algae Bloom FAQ](#)

[Eyes on the Bay](#)

US HPAI Update

Influenza viruses continue to circulate in North America since the beginning of the outbreak in 2022.

For commercial and backyard poultry: 58.79 million birds have been depopulated in 47 states. Maryland has depopulated 1,786,704 in 4 counties in broilers, commercial table egg breeders and table egg layers, and non-poultry/ backyard birds. No MD cases have been reported in 2023.

For wild birds: 7,176 positive detections have been documented, with thousands more likely affected. For Maryland, 25 positive detections have been documented in 9 counties. Species affected include black vultures, Canada geese, mallards, American black ducks, a lesser scaup, bald eagles and a brown pelican.

For mammals: 200 detections have been reported in a wide variety of aquatic and terrestrial mammals. There have been no mammal detections in MD.

To follow reports of HPAI in North American domestic and wild animals visit the USDA website: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/2022-hpai>

Updated guidelines for equine arboviral surveillance in Maryland in 2023

The Arboviral surveillance season began on July 1, 2023. As a reminder, equine neurologic syndromes and any of the equine encephalitides, including West Nile virus (WNV), are reportable to the Maryland Department of Agriculture

ZOONOTIC AND OTHER ANIMAL DISEASES OF CONCERN IN MARYLAND

Updated guidelines for equine arboviral surveillance in Maryland in 2023 (continued)

(MDA) Animal Health Program. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) offers laboratory testing of equine specimens for WNV and other arboviruses, and we encourage you to make use of this service.

Arboviral disease continues to affect both human and animal populations in Maryland. Since the emergence of West Nile virus in the state in 1999, there have been 398 human WNV cases, 295 WNV equine cases, and 709 WNV-positive mosquito pools reported in Maryland. Reported equine WNV cases reached a peak of 234 in 2003 and have declined considerably since that time, with 6 or less cases reported annually in subsequent years. Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus has been periodically detected in equine populations in Maryland as well, most recently in a horse in Worcester County in 2019.

As in previous years, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) will work with the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to conduct surveillance for arboviral diseases in horses. From July 1, 2023 – October 31, 2023, the Maryland Public Health Laboratory will accept serum, brain, and/or CSF samples from horses exhibiting clinical signs consistent with arboviral disease for testing.

The lab offers the following tests free of charge:

- WNV and EEE polymerase chain reaction (PCR) on brain tissue, and/or CSF, and
- WNV IgM capture ELISA on CSF and/or serum samples

Please note the following guidelines:

- For serological testing, the Serological Testing Form (MDH Form 4677) should be completed. The submitter should fill out all required information in the blue section and note any clinical signs under the Arbovirus/West Nile Virus Panel section.
- For culture and viral isolation, the Infectious Agents: Culture/Detection Form (MDH Form 4676) should be used. The submitter should fill out all pertinent information in the yellow section and place the appropriate specimen code in the box next to Arbovirus Panel.
- For both of the above forms, write “EQUINE” across the top of the form.
- Any veterinarian or other individual submitting equine specimens for arboviral testing should complete one or both of the above forms, along with the Equine Arboviral Testing Form available at https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CZVBD/Shared%20Documents/equine_arbolab_form4619.pdf. A separate form must accompany each specimen.
- Complete contact information must be provided on all of the above forms, including the owner’s address and phone number and the address where the horse is stabled. The specimen will not be tested without this information.
- Each form should be completed legibly, preferably using block letters.
- Only specimens from horses exhibiting neurologic signs consistent with arboviral infection will be accepted for testing; the laboratory will not test samples from asymptomatic animals or to determine response to vaccination.
- The Maryland Public Health Laboratory will not accept specimens from horses that are stabled outside of Maryland.
- To request the above laboratory testing forms, please contact the Maryland Public Health Laboratory at (443) 681-3800. Also, the laboratory testing forms can be downloaded from the Laboratory website at <https://health.maryland.gov/laboratories/Pages/Home.aspx>.

In addition to the testing services offered by the Maryland Public Health Laboratory, equine necropsies are also available for a fee at the MDA Frederick Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory. The Frederick Laboratory can be contacted at (301) 600-1548.

As always, regular vaccination of equines against WNV is encouraged. It is also recommended that horses be vaccinated annually against rabies and EEE. To speak with MDA Animal Health staff or to report neurologic disease in horses, please call (410) 841-5810. To report a neurologic horse after normal business hours, please call (410) 841-5971. Information about arboviral and other infectious diseases in equines is available on the MDA website at

ZOONOTIC AND OTHER ANIMAL DISEASES OF CONCERN IN MARYLAND

Updated guidelines for equine arboviral surveillance in Maryland in 2023 (continued)

<http://mda.maryland.gov/AnimalHealth/Pages/default.aspx> . General information on WNV and other arboviruses is available on the Maryland West Nile Virus web page at <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CZVBD/Pages/west-nile-virus.aspx> and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/> .

If you have any other questions or concerns or would like general information about WNV, please contact the MDH Center for Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases at (410) 767-5649.

One Health Approach for Reporting Veterinary Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacterales and Other Bacteria of Public Health Concern

A carbapenem-resistant Enterobacterales outbreak at a veterinary teaching hospital in the United States increased urgency for improved communication among diagnostic laboratories, public health authorities, veterinarians, and pet owners.

Kansas State University, University of Missouri, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and Veterinary Laboratory Investigation and Response Network created a **surveillance, storage, and reporting protocol for veterinary antimicrobial-resistant bacteria**; determined frequency of those bacteria in companion animals during 2018–2021; and created **educational flyers for veterinarians and pet owners**.

The report recommends a One Health strategy to create efficient surveillance programs to identify and report antimicrobial-resistant bacteria and educate veterinarians and pet owners about transmission risks.

The report published in the Journal of Emerging Infectious Diseases can be accessed [here](#).

Alpha-gal Syndrome

New CDC reports show that alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), a tick bite-associated food allergy, is an emerging clinical and public health concern; however, many clinicians are unaware of the condition, how to diagnose it, and how to manage it.

- Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is an emerging, tick bite–associated allergic condition characterized by a potentially life-threatening immunoglobulin E (IgE)–mediated hypersensitivity to galactose-alpha-1,3-galactose (alpha-gal), an oligosaccharide found in most non primate mammalian meat and products derived from these mammals.
- Between 2017 and 2022, there were more than 90,000 suspected cases of AGS documented in the United States. However, because the diagnosis of AGS requires a diagnostic test and clinical exam, and some people may not get tested, it’s estimated that as many as 450,000 people may have been affected by AGS since 2010.
- A U.S. survey found that nearly half of clinicians had never heard of AGS, and among those who had, fewer than one third knew how to diagnose it.
- More research on AGS, expanded tick surveillance, and increased education are needed to improve public health outreach and prevention and support clinician understanding of this emerging condition.
- Clinicians should talk to their patients about protecting themselves from tick bites and encourage them to use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents and check their bodies, clothing, and gear for ticks after spending time outdoors.

Important links: [Alpha-gal Syndrome | Ticks | CDC](#)

[Health Care Provider Knowledge Regarding Alpha-gal Syndrome — United States, March–May 2022](#)

[Geographic Distribution of Suspected Alpha-gal Syndrome Cases — United States, January 2017–December 2022](#)

Zoonotic Disease Compendium Available Open Access

A Review of Zoonotic Disease Threats to Pet Owners: A Compendium of Measures to Prevent Zoonotic Diseases Associated with Non-Traditional Pets Such as Rodents and Other Small Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians, Backyard Poultry, and Other Selected Animals can be accessed [online](#).

MARYLAND ANIMAL RABIES CASES, 2023

Table 2. New (confirmed since the previous Bulletin) and Cumulative Rabies Cases, Week Ending September 30, 2023

Jurisdiction	Bat Total (New)	Cat Total (New)	Cow Total (New)	Dog Total (New)	Fox Total (New)	Groundhog Total (New)	Raccoon Total (New)	Skunk Total (New)	Other Total (New)	Total (New)
Allegany		3			2(1)		1(1)			6(2)
Anne Arundel	2(1)						7(4)			9(5)
Baltimore	1(1)	3(2)			3(3)		12(8)			19(14)
Baltimore City	1(1)				2(1)		11(10)			14(12)
Calvert					1(1)		1			2(1)
Caroline		1(1)						1		2(1)
Carroll	1(1)	2(1)	1		3(2)		3(3)	1(1)		11(8)
Cecil		1(1)			1		1			3(1)
Charles								1(1)		1(1)
Dorchester							2			2
Frederick	1				3(1)		11(3)	6(3)	1(1)	22(8)
Garrett							2(2)			2(2)
Harford	1(1)	1(1)			1(1)		6(1)	1		10(4)
Howard					2		3(2)			5(2)
Kent										0
Montgomery	4(3)				1(1)		11(7)			16(11)
Prince George's	1(1)	3(1)				1(1)	2(1)			7(4)
Queen Anne's	1(1)						2(1)	1(1)		4(3)
Saint Mary's		2(2)					3(3)			5(5)
Somerset										0
Talbot					1(1)	1	3(2)	1		6(3)
Washington		1					5(3)	4(3)		10(6)
Wicomico	2(2)	1(1)					4(3)			7(6)
Worcester		1(1)					2(2)			3(3)
Total (New)	15(12)	19(11)	1		20(12)	2(1)	92(56)	16(9)	1(1)	166(102)

Other: horse (1)

For complete animal rabies data:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CZVBD/pages/Data-and-Statistics.aspx>

To view previous issues of the Maryland One Health Bulletin (MOHB):

<http://mda.maryland.gov/animalHealth/Pages/md-one-health.aspx>

Maryland Department of Health Weekly Public Health and Emergency Preparedness Bulletin:

<https://preparedness.health.maryland.gov/Pages/PHPSA.aspx>

National Wildlife Health Center New and Ongoing Wildlife Mortality Events Nationwide:

<https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nwhc>

U.S. Livestock and Poultry Disease Events and Trends:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information>

Maryland Department of Health Weekly Influenza Report:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/influenza/Pages/home.aspx>