



Canada Goose Nest/Egg Management and Avian Influenza

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is monitoring waterfowl mortality events at numerous locations throughout Illinois. Test results received so far indicate highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) as the definitive cause of death.

The public is reminded to avoid handling or attempting to capture waterfowl or other wild birds displaying signs of illness. If carcasses need to be disposed of, the IDNR recommends following guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health (see page 2). The IDNR is unable to assist with carcass removal in most situations.

IDNR will continue to monitor for mortality events from HPAI throughout the state during the seasonal bird migration. Members of the public are encouraged to report concentrations of 5 or more deceased birds found at one location to IDNR as soon as possible. Reports can be made to the local IDNR district wildlife biologist at the following link: <https://wildlifeillinois.org/idnr-district-wildlife-biologist/>.

For those engaged in Canada goose nest/egg management activities, IDNR urges additional precaution. While the current risk of transmission to humans is low, nest/egg management will bring permittees in close contact with infectious agents (e.g. feces, feathers) that may lead to disease transmission. Additionally, management activities may facilitate air-borne movement of those materials, causing the potential inhalation of the virus. IDNR suggests that permittees wear proper personal protective equipment (disposable gloves, safety goggles, N95 masks, etc.) while conducting nest management activities, as well as using proper hygiene practices (washing hands with soap and water, hand sanitizer, washing clothes with detergent and hot water, disinfecting equipment used, etc.). These practices should minimize the risk of transmission of HPAI. Additionally, should you observe geese displaying signs of illness, IDNR recommends avoiding coming into contact with those birds and their associated nests/eggs.

If you have questions about HPAI or suggested practices for managing nests/eggs, please reach out to Ben Williams (ben.williams@illinois.gov). If you develop flu-like symptoms within seven days of nest/egg management activities or disposing dead birds, seek medical attention.



How do I dispose of dead birds on my property (5 or more)

Given the concern about avian influenza in wild birds (especially waterfowl and aquatic birds and birds of prey) and the fact that more dead birds may increase the possibility that avian influenza may be the cause of the deaths, the following are tips to reduce the potential risk of avian influenza spreading to people who may need to pick up dead birds on their property during a die-off. While it is unlikely that handling dead birds would lead to human infection, it is best to be cautious. If you should develop flu-like illness within seven days of disposing of a group of dead birds, seek medical attention.

Before disposing of dead wild birds when five or more occur, contact your District Wildlife Biologist with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources at <https://www.wildlifeillinois.org/sidebar/contact-an-idnr-district-wildlife-biologist/> or call the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services, at 1-866-487-3297 to determine if domesticated bird samples should be collected for testing.

What supplies are needed?

- Disposable waterproof gloves
- Plastic bags
- Safety goggles
- N95 mask
- Secure trash can

Instructions

1. Don't use bare hands to pick up any dead bird or animal.
2. Use disposable waterproof gloves and/or an inverted plastic bag to pick up the dead bird(s). Double the plastic bag with the bird(s) inside and dispose in the trash where it cannot be accessed by children or animals.
3. Consider wearing a raincoat or disposable plastic trash bag over your clothes.
4. Safety goggles and an N95 mask (available in retail stores) can be used to protect your eyes, nose, and mouth.
5. After handling a bird, avoid touching your face with glove or unwashed hands.
6. After the bird(s) are disposed of, take gloves off first and put into plastic bag for disposal.
7. Wash hands with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer.
8. Remove mask and goggles.
9. Throw away any disposable equipment after use (mask, gloves) and disinfect other equipment (like safety goggles) according to manufacturer's specifications.
10. Wash clothes in washing machine with detergent and use the hot water cycle.