



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Champaign Health District

Healthy Lives, Healthy Community

Health Commissioner
Gabe Jones, MPH

www.champaignhd.com



Champaign Health District
1512 S. U.S. 68 Suite Q-100
Urbana, OH 43078
P: 937-484-1605
F: 937-484-1622
health@champaignhd.com

Board of Health
Dave Vernon, President
Max Coates, Vice President
John Atkins
Dr. Joshua Richards, MD
Dr. Ahsan Ullah, MD

Public Information Statement: Bird Flu in Ohio

Date: February 14, 2025

Recently, bird flu has been detected in Ohio and many commercial poultry birds have been destroyed to prevent the spread. The concern of spreading from the illness may be passed from wild birds to other areas in the state. Please take caution when a dead bird is discovered.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has confirmed the first human case of bird flu (Avian Influenza) in the state for 2025. The affected individual is a farm worker from Mercer County who contracted the virus after coming into contact with deceased commercial poultry.

Handling Dead Birds During Bird Flu Outbreaks

If you find a dead bird, it's important to handle it with care to prevent the potential spread of avian influenza (bird flu). Follow these steps:

1. **Contact Authorities:** Ohioans can report sick or dead wild birds to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) at 1-800-WILDLIFE and sick or dead poultry to the ODA at 614-728-6220. They can provide guidance and may collect the bird for testing.
2. **Use Protective Gear:** Wear disposable gloves when handling the bird. If gloves are not available, use a plastic bag turned inside out to pick up the bird.
3. **Double-Bag the Carcass:** Place the bird in a plastic bag, seal it, and then place that bag into a second plastic bag. Seal the second bag tightly.
4. **Dispose Properly:** Dispose of the double-bagged bird in your regular trash. Do not bury it or leave it out in the open.
5. **Disinfect:** Clean and disinfect any surfaces or tools that came into contact with the bird. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water afterward.
6. **Monitor Health:** If you experience flu-like symptoms within 10 days of handling a dead bird, seek medical attention and inform your healthcare provider about the exposure.

- For more information, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) or the U.S. Department of Agriculture (www.usda.gov)



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- **Ohio Department of Health** – <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/zoonotic-disease-program/diseases/hpai>
- **Ohio Department of Agriculture** – <https://agri.ohio.gov/programs/animal-disease-diagnostic-lab/resources/Highly-Pathogenic-Avian-Influenza>
- **Ohio Department of Natural Resources** – <https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/wildlife-management/wildlife-disease/avian-flu>

Current Situation:

- **Risk to the Public: The risk of bird flu to the general public remains very low.** However, individuals who have direct contact with sick or dead poultry should take precautions.
- **Symptoms:** Bird flu symptoms in humans can range from mild to severe and may include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, and in severe cases, respiratory distress.
- **Precautions:** The ODH advises avoiding unprotected exposure to sick or dead birds and their environments. Use protective gear if you must handle poultry.

Preventive Measures:

1. **Avoid Contact:** Do not touch sick or dead birds. If you encounter them.
2. **Protective Gear:** If you work with poultry, wear appropriate protective clothing, including gloves and masks.
3. **Hygiene:** Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling birds or their environments.
4. **Monitor Health:** If you develop flu-like symptoms after contact with birds, seek medical attention promptly.
5. **Flu Shots:** The seasonal flu vaccines do not provide protection against Avian Flu. The best way to reduce your risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get a flu vaccine every year, however.

Public Health Response:

- The ODH is closely monitoring the situation and working with local health departments to prevent further spread.
- Surveillance and testing of poultry flocks are ongoing to detect and control outbreaks.

For more information, please visit the Ohio Department of Health website or contact your local health department.

Stay informed and stay safe.