



Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

What is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a progressive, fatal, and degenerative neurological disease found in deer, elk, moose and other members of the deer family, known as “cervids.”

It was first recognized in 1967 as a clinical ‘wasting’ syndrome of unknown cause in captive mule deer in Colorado. CWD belongs to the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). TSEs include a number of different diseases affecting animals or humans including bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle, scrapie in sheep and goats, and Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (CJD) in humans. Although CWD shares certain features with other TSEs, it is a distinct disease affecting only cervids.

Signs and Symptoms

CWD is a slow and progressive disease. Because the disease has a long incubation period, deer, elk, and moose infected with CWD may not produce any visible signs of the disease for a number of years after they become infected. As the disease progresses, deer, elk, and moose with CWD show changes in behavior and appearance.

Clinical signs may include:

- progressive weight loss
- loss of appetite
- stumbling
- excessive thirst and urination
- tremors
- listlessness
- lack of coordination
- teeth grinding
- blank facial expressions
- abnormal head posture
- excessive salivation
- drooping ears

How does it spread?

CWD can spread through natural movements of infected animals, and transportation of live infected animals or carcass parts. Deer and other cervids may become infected with CWD by animal-to-animal contact or by animal contact with a contaminated environment. Prions are shed from infected animals in saliva, urine, blood, soft- antler material, feces, or from the decomposition of an infected animal which ultimately contaminates the soil and environment in which deer and other cervids live. Prions shed into the environment can remain capa-

ble of infecting other animals for an undetermined number of years. As more deer become infected over time the number of infectious CWD prions in the environment increases. Once CWD prions become established in an area, deer are more likely to become exposed to CWD by coming into contact with prions shed in the environment. Conversely, in areas where CWD is not well established, and where the environment is relatively uncontaminated, animal to animal contact is the most likely source of transmission of CWD to uninfected deer.

What should I do if I see a cervid that shows symptoms of CWD?

If you see a cervid showing clinical signs, accurately document the location of the animal and immediately call the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) at (800) 550-8242, or the nearest TPWD Wildlife Division or Law Enforcement Division office. Do not attempt to touch, disturb, kill or remove the animal.

Treatment Options

There is no known treatment or vaccine for CWD.

Does CWD Affect Humans?

CWD has been studied by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia, and they have found no evidence that CWD poses a serious risk to humans. The World Health Organization (WHO) likewise has advised that there is no current scientific evidence that CWD can infect humans. However, as a precaution, the WHO advises that deer and elk with evidence of CWD should not be consumed by people or other animals.

Where has CWD been Found?

CWD has been diagnosed in captive cervid facilities and/or known to infect wild deer, elk and moose in 24 states and in Canada: Alberta, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

CWD Management and Regulations for Exotic Cervid on Your Property

TAHC has surveillance, movement reporting, identification, and record keeping requirements for Exotic CWD Susceptible Species harvested, captured, or bred on your property. They can all be viewed at [http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=4&pt=2&ch=40&rl=Y](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=4&pt=2&ch=40&rl=Y).

Please note, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) regulates free-ranging Texas native species, such as white-tailed deer and mule deer.

CWD Management and Regulations for Hunters

TAHC and TPWD have established three CWD Zones in high risk areas of Texas for the purpose of disease detection, control, and eradication.

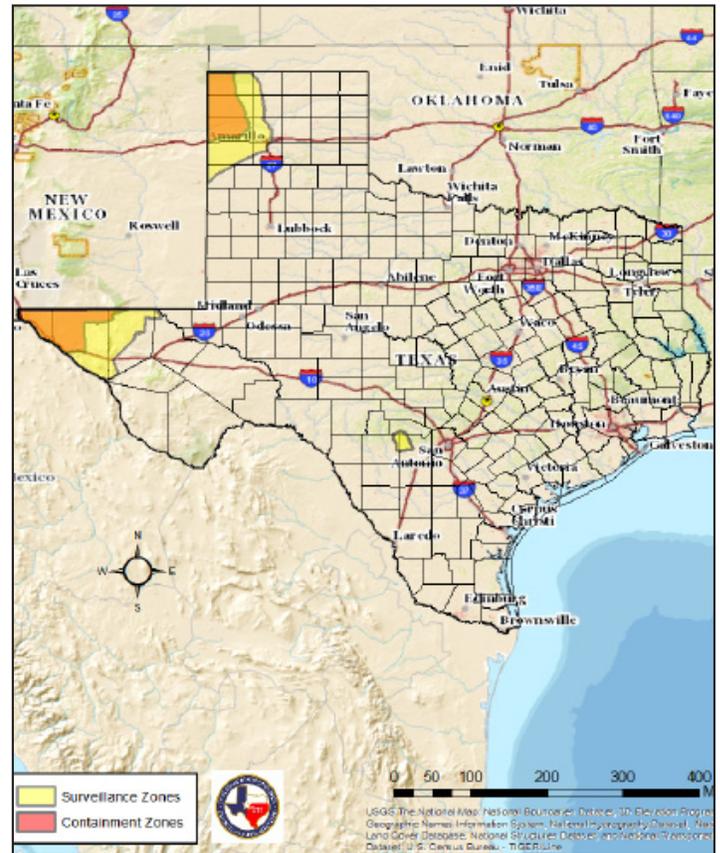
1. Trans-Pecos CWD Zone
2. Panhandle CWD Zone
3. Medina County CWD Zone

To learn more about the zones and surveillance requirements visit [http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=4&pt=2&ch=40&rl=Y](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=4&pt=2&ch=40&rl=Y).

Additional CWD Resources:

- Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance: <http://cwd-info.org/>
- Department of Health & Human Services Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov/prions/cwd/index.html>
- United States Department of Agriculture: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animal-health/animal-disease-information/sa_alternate_livestock/sa_cervid_health/sa_cwd/ct_cwd_index

TAHC Chronic Wasting Disease Zones



Information provided by the
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800-550-8242



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