

Venison and CWD What Hunters Should Know

Information from the Wisconsin Division of Public Health

Chronic Wasting Disease is a fatal disease that affects the nervous system of deer and elk. The disease is caused by an abnormal protein called a prion, which can survive cooking temperatures. Prions concentrate in certain tissues, such as brain, spinal cord, lymph nodes, and spleen. There is new evidence that they may also be present in low concentrations in muscle tissue. The World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control agree that there is currently no scientific evidence proving that CWD can cause disease in humans. However, in the interest of safety, these organizations advise that people not consume meat from deer, moose, or elk which are known to be positive for CWD.

In keeping with this recommendation, the Wisconsin Division of Public Health recommends that venison from deer harvested within the CWD Management Zone not be consumed or distributed to others until CWD test results on the source deer are known to be negative. The areas in Wisconsin and Illinois where deer tested positive for CWD are indicated on the map below.

Venison from multiple deer should be kept separate and labeled before freezing, so that you will know which deer was the source of the meat.

For more information about CWD and its implications for human health, call the Wisconsin Division of Public Health at (608) 267-9003 or visit: dhfs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/communicable/factsheets/creutzfeldt.htm

Chronic Wasting Disease Update

You will see some changes in the deer season framework this fall in the CWD Zone. These changes reflect a blending of CWD Stakeholder Advisory Group recommendations, feedback from 8 public hearings we held this spring, and the Department's recommendations to manage this disease.

We combined the Disease Eradication Zones and the Herd Reduction Zone into one zone, called the CWD Management Zone (CWD-MZ). All units within the CWD-MZ will have the same season framework. The season structure in the CWD Management Zone is very similar to the season structure used elsewhere in the state for units that are over goal. We hope this reduces confusion for hunters. The one season that is unique to the CWD-MZ is the holiday firearm season that allows hunters to shoot deer of either-sex from December 24 to January 4 as long as they follow Earn-a-Buck rules. Here is what the 2008 season will look like in the CWD-MZ:

- Archery season: September 13 to January 4
- Youth hunt: October 11–12
- Early firearm season: **Antlerless Only** October 16–19
- 9-day firearm deer season: November 22–30
- 10-day muzzleloader season: December 1–10
- Late firearm season: **Antlerless Only** December 11-14
- Holiday firearm season: December 24–January 4
- Unlimited Earn-a-Buck regulations, except during Oct. & Dec. antlerless only deer seasons

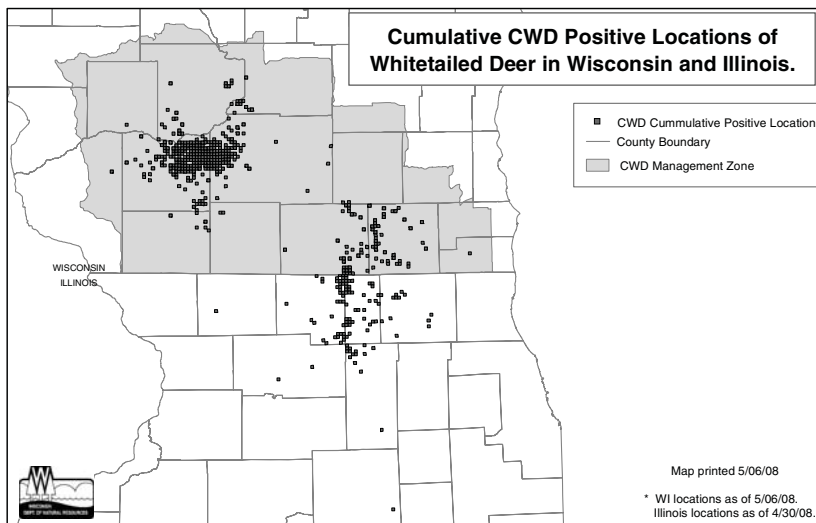
Hunters can use rifles throughout the CWD-MZ, except in metro unit 76M, which will be shotgun only (see the map on page 13). White and albino deer may be harvested throughout the entire CWD-MZ (formerly restricted to the Disease Eradication Zones).

The Department is also discontinuing the \$2 DEZ landowner and hunter permits this year. We estimate that we would lose over \$850,000 in license sales if we offered those permits throughout the entire CWD-MZ. It did not make sense to continue the program in the face of funding shortages for CWD management, as well as the interest in funding the pantry program, expanding testing, supporting research, and bolstering our information and education efforts. We recognize the important role that landowners and hunters play in managing CWD, but need to consider more cost effective ways of supporting that role.

Beginning September 1, 2009 new regulations will be implemented for carcass transportation. We will prohibit the importation of whole cervid carcasses (deer, moose and elk) into Wisconsin from areas within states or provinces that have CWD and prohibit whole deer carcass movement from the CWD Management Zone to elsewhere in WI (see page 15).

From 2002 to June 2008, nearly 139,000 deer have been tested for CWD from across the state. A total of 990 free-ranging deer have tested positive. All of the positive cases have been found in the CWD Management Zone. The southeast Wisconsin cases are adjacent to an outbreak in northern Illinois where 189 CWD positive deer have been found since 2002 (see map on page 44).

This fall we will be doing a second round of disease testing in our Northern Region. We encourage all deer hunters to turn in the heads from their registered adult deer as part of this surveillance effort in northern Wisconsin.



To see updated Chronic Wasting Disease maps, visit: dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/cwd/maps.htm

We will also be sampling within the CWD Management Zone, and hunters are required to submit samples from adult deer in the following areas:

- Eastern Iowa and Western Dane Counties, between Ridgeway and Mt. Horeb and stretching from Highway 18/151 north to the Wisconsin River.
- Between Lake Geneva, Lake Koshkonong, Beloit and Palmyra.
- Around Devil's Lake State Park, from Highway 12 east to the interstate.

The first two areas support ongoing research to help us better understand how the rate of disease infection changes over time. The Devil's Lake area has the additional purpose of monitoring the "northern front" of the disease in Wisconsin. We can work with hunters who plan to cape-out their deer to get a sample.

Successfully managing CWD in Wisconsin will require a sustained effort over many years, necessitating cooperation and communication among natural resources and agricultural agencies, hunters, landowners, farmed cervid producers, and the many citizens of the state who benefit from a healthy deer herd.

Thanks for your role in helping to manage CWD over the past 6 years.

Safe Handling of Deer

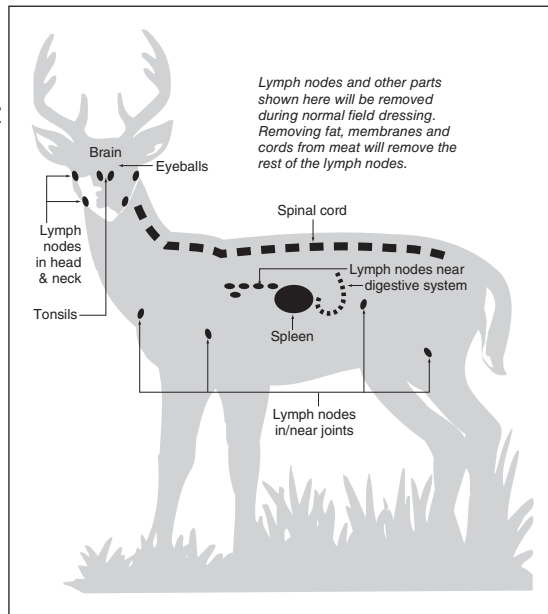
General Precautions

- Do not eat the eyes, brain, spinal cord, spleen, tonsils or lymph nodes of any deer.
- Do not eat any part of a deer that appears abnormal.

Hunters

- **Wear rubber or latex gloves** when field dressing carcasses.
- **Bone out the meat** from your animal.
- **Remove** all internal organs.
- **Minimize the handling** of brain, spinal cord, spleen and lymph nodes (lumps of tissue next to organs or in fat).
- **Do not use** household knives or utensils.
- **Use equipment dedicated** to field dressing only.
- **Clean knives and equipment** of residue and sanitize with household bleach. Use a solution of equal parts chlorine bleach and water. Wipe down countertops and let them dry. Soak items like knives one hour. When through, dilute the solution further and dump it down a drain.
- **Request that your animal be processed individually** and not combined with meat from other animals.
- **Avoid use of saws.** Do not cut through spine or skull except to remove the head. Use a knife designated only for this purpose.

More information can be found regarding deer processing at: datcp.state.wi.us/ah-agriculture/animals/disease/chronic/pdf/venison_safety_2side.pdf.



Your Investment in Wisconsin's Wildlife 2006–2007

Tracking the Fish & Wildlife Account

Fish & Wildlife account:
\$97.4 million (17.9%)



\$544.3 million total
DNR costs FY 07

How the Fish & Wildlife account money gets spent...

- 29.3¢ of each Fish & Wildlife dollar goes towards wildlife management activities.
- The Fish & Wildlife Account pays for \$28.6 million or 83% of the \$34.4 million spent on wildlife programs, including 179 of the 203 positions assigned to wildlife programs.

What did your money accomplish in 2006–2007?

Conducted chronic wasting disease (CWD) management: We continued to monitor and conduct research on CWD. Wildlife staff and volunteers collected CWD samples from over 30,000 deer with 205 testing positive. Approximately 7500 deer were tested in the West Central Region as part of a second sweep of disease surveillance through the state. No positive deer were found in the region.

Improved access to wildlife on public and private lands: We worked on public lands to construct 30 parking lots, nine miles of boundary fencing, eight miles of trails, three miles of access roads, and nine facilities serving people with disabilities. A total of 18,654 acres of private lands were leased for public wildlife recreation including hunting.

Stocked wildlife for recreation and population expansion: At the state game farm in Poynette, wildlife staff produced 52,000 ring-necked pheasants for release on 70 wildlife areas. Game farm staff produced 51,000 pheasant chicks for cooperating conservation clubs around the state, who then raised and released them on lands open to public hunting. We successfully released 40 greater prairie-chicken hens from Minnesota on the Buena Vista Wildlife Area in Central Wisconsin. We captured and released 60 turkeys in northern counties to help expand population distribution to some of the last places in Wisconsin without turkeys.

Responded to the public's interests and concerns: We made over 1000 wildlife interpretive presentations to 38,000 people and conducted 133 outdoor skills programs with more than 11,000 participants. We also responded to 1359 wildlife damage complaints, 8863 wildlife nuisance complaints, over 2500 urban wildlife inquiries, 710 agriculture damage abatement shooting permits, and \$1.35 million in damage compensation payments.

Managed and monitored wildlife populations: Working with stakeholders, wildlife staff set harvest quotas, hunting rules and regulations for several game species. More than 1,000 wildlife surveys were conducted to assess the status and trends of many wildlife species. We banded over 12,000 waterfowl and 1000 mourning doves for studies on harvest rates to help set hunting regulations.

Enhanced wildlife populations through habitat management: Technical assistance on wildlife habitat was provided to more than 1,300 landowners and about 1,000 contacts with other agencies and conservation organizations. Grassland and wetland habitats were established on 3,015 and 2,611 acres of public lands, respectively. We helped landowners establish 659 acres of grassland habitat and restore 70 wetlands on private lands. We established 138 food plots and erected 250 nesting structures.