

What to Do When You Find a Dead Bird



The Maryland Department of Health has discontinued routine testing of dead birds for West Nile virus (WNV) in Maryland. West Nile virus has been detected in humans and animals throughout the state, and is expected to return each year. State and local health officials continue to monitor WNV activity through surveillance of human, mosquito, and equine populations.

There is no evidence that a person can get infected with WNV from handling live or dead infected birds. However, it is best to avoid barehanded contact with any dead animal.

If you find a dead bird, dispose of it as follows:

1. Wear plastic or latex gloves or use a plastic bag as a glove
2. With your gloved hand, place or wrap the bird in a plastic bag and tie the bag securely (alternatively, a shovel may be used to pick up bird)
3. Dispose of the bag (and gloves) in an outdoor trash receptacle
4. Wash your hands with soap and water

Sick or injured birds should be reported to your local wildlife rehabilitator. Call 1-877-463-6497 for a list of licensed rehabilitators or visit the Maryland Department of Natural Resources web site:

https://dnr.maryland.gov/Wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/wildlifeproblems.aspx

For more information about West Nile virus, contact your local health department or call the Center for Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases at 410-767-5649 or visit:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CZVBD/Pages/west-nile-virus.aspx>