



Veterinary Public Health

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Contact Information

Veterinary Public Health
Program
313 N Figueroa St. Rm 1127
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel (213) 288-7060
Fax (213) 481-2375
vet@ph.lacounty.gov

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Report Dead Birds

You can help monitor Los Angeles County for West Nile Virus. Whenever you see a dead bird, report it! [Share this flyer about reporting dead birds in Los Angeles County.](#)

Report to either of these two phone numbers:

213-989-7060 - Los Angeles County Veterinary Public Health
877-WNV-BIRD - California Dead Bird Hotline



Why report dead birds?

Mosquitoes can infect many types of birds with West Nile Virus (WNV). Some bird species, like crows, get very sick from WNV and usually die from it. By testing birds for WNV, we can track the virus in our environment. Your reports help us monitor Los Angeles County for WNV.

Safety First!

Never touch a dead animal directly with your bare hands. Use a shovel or cover your hands (e.g. wearing gloves) when moving dead birds. Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling a bird. Do not bring dead birds indoors.

What types of dead birds should be reported?

All reports of dead birds are helpful but not all birds can be tested for disease. **Only freshly dead, adult birds will be tested for WNV.** Testing is performed on birds that have been dead for a short time (24 hours or less) and that are not rotten or covered with ants. Baby birds will not be tested. Testing for other diseases may be done where there is a cluster of three or more dead birds. Our program performs testing for WNV on all bird species *except doves, pigeons, ducks and poultry.*

How to report a dead bird and prepare it for testing.

Only freshly dead birds that have been properly prepared will be picked up for testing. [Watch this video](#) from the California Department of Public Health to learn how to collect a bird for testing. Reporting a dead bird involves the following steps:

1. **Call 213-288-7060 (LA County Public Health) or 877-WNV-BIRD (CA Department of Public Health).**
2. **Report the the type of bird.** Our program performs testing for WNV on all bird species *except doves and pigeons.*
3. **Report the location** where the bird was originally found.
4. **Report the freshness of the bird.** Look at the bird without touching it. A freshly dead animal will have almost no odor, ants or maggots, and will not be dried up.
5. **Say whether you are able to put it in a bag.** Never touch a dead bird directly with your bare hands. Use disposable gloves or place a plastic bag (without holes) over your hand. Turn the bag inside out over the bird and then tie the bag closed. Double bag it this way.
 - If the bird *IS NOT* good for testing – discard in outdoor trash container and skip to #7.
 - If the bird *IS* fresh and good for testing, follow the rest of the steps below.
6. **(Only for birds for testing) Say where you will put the bird for pickup.** Keep dead bird cool. Place the bird where our staff can easily find it. Place the bagged bird in a shady accessible location (such as on a porch) and tell us where to find it. If possible, tape a note on the outer bag saying: "FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT". On hot days, place a separate, sealed bag of ice on top of the bird. Do not let ice melt directly onto the bird. Put both the bagged bird and bag of ice in a third plastic bag.
7. **Wash your hands** after you finish handling the bird in the bag.
8. Note that we will call you with the test results as soon as they are available.

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