



Health Advisory: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

Amarillo Public Health (APH) has received reports that the wild bird population here in the panhandle is being heavily affected by illness attributed to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). APH is releasing this health advisory for your situational awareness and protection.

HPAI is a severe form of flu that mainly affects large birds such as ducks and geese, but can also affect other animals through prolonged exposure, such as dairy cattle and cats. Humans are also at risk of getting HPAI, especially if in contact with sick birds or animals.

Possible symptoms of HPAI in birds (please note not all birds infected with HPAI will have symptoms *and can instead die suddenly*):

- Lack of energy and appetite
- Decreased egg production or soft-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of head, comb, eyelids, wattles, and hocks/shanks
- Purple discoloration of wattles, comb, and legs
- Discharge from eyes or nose, coughing, and sneezing
- Diarrhea or abnormal stool
- Head tilt or inability to lift head (may drown in water)
- Gasping for air (difficulty breathing)
- Stumbling or falling/lack of coordination
- Falling from the sky
- Not reacting when approached

To protect yourself and your family from exposure, do not touch dead, sick, or injured birds or fowl.

Contact Animal Management & Welfare at 806-378-9032 to assess sick or dead birds and keep pets and other animals away as well.

Although human infections with HPAI are rare, in humans, it can cause symptoms ranging from cough, fever, sore throat, and conjunctivitis to severe disease requiring hospitalization or even leading to death. *If you are concerned that you might be experiencing any illness, you should contact your primary care doctor/practitioner.*

If you cannot avoid contact with birds or other animals that may be sick with HPAI, use personal protective equipment (such as safety goggles, disposable gloves, a respirator or well-fitting mask, rubber boots, and coveralls) when interacting with the birds.

For other pets or animals that have been exposed to sick or dead wild birds/poultry or other animals, contact your veterinarian for additional information and resources.



Amarillo Public Health (APH) encourages everyone to get their annual influenza vaccination. If you have any questions about HPAI, please get in touch with APH at 806-378-6353. Additional resources are linked below.

Thank you,
Todd Bell, MD
Amarillo Public Health Authority

[Backyard Flock Owners: Protect Yourself from Bird Flu | Bird Flu | CDC](#)
[Hunters-Protect Your Poultry and Pet Birds from Avian Influenza](#)
[Reducing Exposure for Workers to Avian Influenza A Viruses | Bird Flu | CDC](#)