

# Dept. of Natural Resources: Help report and manage Chronic Wasting Disease

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**MADISON, Wis.** – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) invites the public to help report and manage Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) this fall.

CWD is a contagious, fatal neurological disease that affects the nervous system of deer, elk, moose and caribou. It belongs to the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) or prion diseases.

Prions are misshaped proteins that can spread the disease through direct animal-to-animal contact or in the environment through bodily fluids or carcass parts of an infected deer. Prions are extremely resilient and capable of remaining in the soil for years, potentially infecting several deer from a single source.

The disease can have an incubation period of over a year, which means infected deer can appear healthy for months before showing signs of illness, such as drastic weight loss, drooped head and ears, loss of coordination, excessive salivation and reduced fear of humans.

## How To Help

The [Adopt-a-Kiosk \(AAK\)](#) and [Adopt-a-Dumpster \(AAD\)](#) programs enable hunters and volunteers to take an active role in CWD response efforts by increasing access to testing and opportunities to safely dispose of deer carcasses and waste.

The DNR's self-serve CWD kiosks provide hunters with convenient 24/7 access to CWD sampling materials and test kits. The DNR partners with individuals and

organizations to construct and expand the number of kiosks each deer season.

“Partnerships like the Adopt-a-Kiosk and Adopt-a-Dumpster programs provide great value and are instrumental in allowing us to work together in continued CWD surveillance in Wisconsin,” said Erin Larson, DNR Deer Herd Health Specialist.

Testing deer for CWD provides the DNR valuable data to understand disease distribution in the state and informs hunters about the potential status of their harvest. Making CWD testing more available and increasing participation are vital to the state’s CWD monitoring efforts. Visit the DNR’s [Adopt-a-Kiosk webpage](#) for information on how to get involved.

Through the Adopt-a-Dumpster program, partners work with the DNR to implement convenient deer carcass disposal locations. In areas where disposal options are limited or unavailable, the DNR prefers to locate adopted dumpsters on private land. Groups may be able to host a dumpster on public land with consultation from the DNR.

Proper carcass disposal keeps potentially infected deer off the landscape and slows the spread of CWD in wild herds. The infectious nature and resiliency of CWD prions can increase the spread of CWD if carcasses are brought to new areas and not disposed of properly. Visit the DNR’s [Adopt-a-Dumpster webpage](#) for information on how to get involved.

Monitoring the disease and properly disposing of deer parts are only two elements of the DNR’s coordinated effort to limit the spread of CWD. More information about how to prevent the spread of CWD is located on the DNR’s [CWD webpage](#).