

Dept. of Natural Resources: Releases summary of 2025 CWD sampling efforts

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MADISON, Wis. – With the conclusion of the 2025 deer hunting seasons, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) shares a summary of the year's chronic wasting disease (CWD) sampling efforts.

For the 2025 season, the DNR focused its efforts on increasing sample collection in designated [2025 Fall Priority Areas](#). As in past years, testing was available statewide, but the additional samples tested from this year's priority areas will help the DNR better understand disease levels and distribution in areas where the disease was most recently discovered.

Across Wisconsin, a total of 242 CWD sampling locations were available to hunters, including 163 self-sampling kiosks and 46 staffed sites. Six of the kiosks were managed through the Adopt-a-Kiosk program.

In total, 17,759 deer were sampled throughout the state during the 2025 hunting seasons with 2,006 samples testing positive. Most (87%) of these detections were in the [Southern Farmland Zone](#).

A full breakdown of sampled and positive totals by zone and full CWD year (April 1-March 31) is available on the DNR's [Summary of CWD Statewide Surveillance webpage](#). Results by county are also available on the DNR's [CWD Deer Testing Results by County webpage](#).

The average number of days statewide from when a sample was dropped off at a sampling location to when the CWD result was emailed to the hunter and available

online was 8.9 days. The diagnostic tests are completed at the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

A new map of the CWD-positive detections in wild deer is below. It shows both the historic detections (2001-2024) and the 2025 detections.

In addition to sampling resources, 127 deer carcass waste disposal dumpsters were available to offer an option for hunters to dispose of their deer carcass waste during the 2025 deer season. Partnerships with 60 different organizations or individuals through the Adopt-a-Dumpster program helped to manage 67 of those dumpsters.

The DNR sincerely thanks all the hunters who submitted a sample for CWD, the business owners who managed a CWD sampling site, those who participated in the Adopt-a-Kiosk and Adopt-a-Dumpster partnerships and those who submitted a donation in support of a dumpster this year.

2025 Priority Areas

Prior to the hunting season, the 2025 priority areas were chosen by reviewing the CWD sampling data and determining areas where additional samples and information were most needed. These were areas where the disease was most recently discovered in wild and farm-raised deer in portions of central and northern Wisconsin.

This year, one county within the priority sampling areas, [La Crosse County](#), had its first wild CWD-positive detection.

In the northern part of the state, Oneida County had five additional positives, bringing the total up to 13. One was in the northwestern part of the county, far removed from past detections.

In the western Farmland Zone counties, most positives were found in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Monroe and Trempealeau counties. Jackson County detected its fourth positive, Pierce County detected its third and fourth positives and Polk County detected its fourth and fifth positives. For Dunn County, a positive was found in the far northwest corner of the county, in a different area than past detections.

Within the central Farmland Zone counties, Wood County detected its third positive in a new part of the county, Waupaca County detected its fourth positive, Waushara County detected its fifth and sixth positives and Marathon County detected its sixth

and seventh positives. Positives were also detected in Green Lake and Marquette counties.

In the eastern Farmland Zone counties, Fond du Lac County detected its fifth and sixth positives, while Oconto and Sheboygan counties each detected their third and fourth positives. Shawano County also had six detections, bringing the cumulative total for the county to 13.

Endemic Area And Southern Wisconsin

CWD sampling in the Southern Farmland Zone continues to help measure disease patterns and changes in disease prevalence over time. During the 2025 hunting seasons, 7,656 samples were tested in the Southern Farmland Zone. Of those, 22.7% (1,737) were positive for CWD. Similar percentages were seen in 2024. More positives continue to be found in southwestern Wisconsin than in the southeastern part of the state.

Remainder Of The State

Clark County, which was outside of the priority sampling areas and the endemic area, had its first two wild positive detections in 2025. Portage County detected two wild positives in the northwest portion of the county, significantly removed from those of the past five years where all wild positives had been found in the southern portion of the county.

Additional details on these detections can be found on the [CWD Interactive Map](#) and [CWD Results webpage](#), which includes summaries by county and township.

“CWD remains a complex issue with no single solution for managing the disease,” said Erin Larson, DNR deer herd health specialist. “However, the department remains committed to continuing CWD efforts, including providing services to hunters and creating partnerships with the people of Wisconsin to work towards the common goal of a healthy deer herd and outstanding hunting opportunities in our state.”

The DNR reminds the public that there have been no reported cases of CWD infection in humans to date. However, public health organizations recommend against consuming meat from deer that test positive for CWD and encourage testing deer prior to consumption, especially in [areas prevalent with CWD](#).