

Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin Deer 2017

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The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) began monitoring the state's wild white-tailed deer for chronic wasting disease (CWD) in 1999. Three positive deer were identified from Dane County through random testing of hunter harvested deer in November 2001. Since 2002 nearly 210,000 deer have been tested in Wisconsin for CWD, with over 4,100 testing positive as of March 2018. CWD was detected in the wild in Vernon, Milwaukee, Dodge, & Lincoln counties for the first time during the 2017-18 deer season.

During the 2017 season the department increased the number of samples collected utilizing self-serve kiosks along with enhanced communication and outreach efforts including email CWD sample result notifications, GameReg messaging, and a CWD brochure mailing to non-resident hunters. The main goal of kiosks is to offer a 24/7 option for hunters to help enhance sampling numbers, ease, and options for hunters in the world of electronic registration. Overall feedback from hunters during the 2017 deer season showed they appreciated the option of a kiosk. There was also an increased interest from the tribes in CWD sampling.

Surveillance continued in the southern farmland zone as well as sampling deer in the 10-mile radius areas surrounding the Juneau, Adams, Portage, & Washburn wild positives. In the Washburn area sampling expanded out from the 10-mile radius to include the four counties of Polk, Barron, Burnett, & Washburn. Sampling also occurred in 10-mile radius areas surrounding the locations of captive facilities with a CWD positive detection including Marathon, Eau Claire, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano, & Waupaca counties.

As previously mentioned several counties had CWD detected in the wild for the first time during the 2017 season. These included three deer in Vernon, one in Milwaukee, one in Dodge, and one in Lincoln. In central Wisconsin, there were two wild positives detected for the first time in western Juneau and six additional positives detected in the surveillance area in Adams County. No additional positives were found in the surveillance areas around previous wild positives found in Portage and Washburn counties. No positives were found in surveillance areas around previous captive facility positive locations as well.

From 2002-2016, CWD prevalence within our western monitoring area has shown an overall increasing trend in all sex and age classes. During the 15 years, the trend in prevalence in adult males has risen from 8-10 percent to over 30 percent and in adult females from about 3-4 percent to nearly 15 percent. During that same time, the prevalence trend in yearling males has increased from about 2 percent to over 10 percent and in yearling females from roughly 2 percent to about 9 percent. It is important to keep in mind that annual prevalence estimates are subject to sampling variation, and that trends over time give better information.

Table 1. Wisconsin CWD Surveillance in 2017-2018

DNR Zone	# Sampled	# Analyzed	Positive for CWD
Central Farmland Zone	2,836	2,833	2
Central Forest Zone	56	561	6
Northern Forest Zone	856	845	1
Southern Farmland Zone	5,524	5,522	588
Unknown Zone	81	80	0
Totals:	9,858	9,841	597