



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 17, 2025

**Public Health Advisory Issued for Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center
Following Discovery of Dead Birds**

MUSKEGON, Michigan – Public Health – Muskegon County received notification of a bird die-off involving at least a dozen wild birds at the Muskegon County Resource and Recovery Center. Early information suggests the deaths may be caused by Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Confirmatory laboratory results are expected within the next two weeks.

As a precaution, Public Health – Muskegon County has issued a public health advisory for the Resource and Recovery Center recreation areas. While the risk of HPAI spreading to humans is considered low, residents and visitors should avoid contact with sick or dead birds and practice caution in the area.

Since 2022, Michigan has seen die-offs in wild birds and mammals linked to HPAI. The disease is now considered widespread and endemic in Michigan and North America, with waterfowl, raptors, scavengers, gulls, and terns most affected. With fall bird migration underway, continued cases of HPAI in wild birds are expected.

The risk of HPAI infection in people is low but possible, especially with direct contact with infected birds or contaminated material. Hunters and others who handle wild birds should take precautions.

Wild birds can carry HPAI without looking sick. Do not handle or harvest birds that are obviously ill or dead. Report die-offs of six or more waterfowl, gulls, or shorebirds through the DNR Eyes in the Field tool (www.mi.gov/eyesinthefield) or your local DNR office.

Anyone who has had contact with sick or dead birds at the Resource and Recovery Center should watch for symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, eye irritation, or muscle aches for 10 days after exposure.

Precautions for Waterfowl Hunters

- Cook all meat to 165°F.
- Process birds in the field; bury remains on-site or double-bag for disposal in household trash.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling birds; wash hands well afterward.
- Avoid touching your face while handling wild birds.
- Clean and disinfect knives, equipment, and surfaces after use.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while cleaning birds.

The Resource and Recovery Center recreation area remains open, but visitors should exercise caution and follow these recommendations until further notice.