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*“Working Together for a Healthier Community”*

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## Clinton County Health Department – Press Release 2006 West Nile Virus Bird Submission Policy June 27, 2006

The Clinton County Health Department is requesting that residents report all **dead crows**. If people find dead **blue jays, birds of prey, and ruffed grouse (partridge)** please call to determine testing needs. Testing selected species of dead birds for WNV is one key component of the WNV program. In addition to monitoring dead birds, the CCHD annually implements a mosquito surveillance program.

“It is more important to determine the location and number of dead crows on a weekly basis since crows appears to be the most susceptible to WNV. The Department can use crows as an early indicator of the level of WNV virus circulating in Clinton County,” said Paula Calkins Lacombe, Director of Public Health. Lacombe added “While testing dead crows will help monitor West Nile Virus, it will not provide information about the Avian or bird flu”. “The bird flu is not in the United States and it is not carried by crows. The H5N1 or bird flu virus is carried by a variety of water fowl and has been found in other parts of the world”.

Clinton County residents are encouraged to call (518) 565-4870 Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM to report dead crows, blue jays, birds of prey, and ruffed grouse. These birds are the only species that should be reported at this time. **The Clinton County Health Department is requesting the assistance of county residents to bring these dead birds to the Department.**

### **Specimens acceptable/unacceptable for testing:**

- The best dead specimen is one that is in good condition, recently died within 24 hours, and has not died from identifiable trauma (gunshot or predator). A good specimen will generally still have its eyes.
- Deteriorated birds – those with maggots, noticeable odor of decay or crushed body parts will not be submitted. **These birds are considered by the Arbovirus Laboratory to be un-testable for West Nile Virus.**

### **How to safely handle a dead bird:**

- Use rubber gloves or turn a plastic bag inside out, over your hand to pick up the bird.
- The bird needs to be refrigerated, frozen or placed in a cooler with ice or cold packs. This helps to keep it fresh.
- The bird can then be brought to the Clinton County Health Department’s Environmental Health Unit at 135 Margaret Street, (Second floor of the Old Surrogate Building) Plattsburgh, NY, from Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

For more information go to [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org) or contact us at 565-4870.

Endorsed by: \_\_\_\_\_

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