

Animal Health Alert: Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD) Detected in California
7.9.2020

Dear colleagues,

In May 2020, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) confirmed that a black-tailed jackrabbit tested positive for Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease virus type 2 (RHDV2). This rabbit was one of 10 found dead on a private property in Palm Springs (San Bernardino County). More details are available in the [press release](#). By July 1, 2020, infected wild rabbits were also found in Orange, Riverside and San Diego counties. No cases have been reported in Los Angeles County to date. Outside of California, RHDV2 has caused mortalities in both wild and domestic rabbits in New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Texas and Mexico and wild rabbits in Nevada since March 2020.

RHDV2 is a foreign animal disease and a calicivirus that is not related to coronaviruses. This disease is not a food safety concern and does not affect humans or domestic animals other than rabbits. RHD is highly contagious and often lethal to both domestic and wild rabbit populations. Infected rabbits may exhibit no symptoms leading up to sudden death, or may suffer from fever, swelling, internal bleeding or liver necrosis.

As of May 12, a [quarantine](#) has been placed on rabbits, hares and all associated products and equipment entering California from a state where RHD has been diagnosed in the prior 12 months. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has posted a [map of RHD affected counties](#).

Currently there is no approved RHD vaccine available in the United States. However, California veterinarians may apply to order and import approved vaccinations through the USDA and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). Information on how to order the vaccine is available [here](#).

All rabbit owners and veterinarians are advised to learn about RHD and how to protect rabbits. For more information about biosecurity and disinfection recommendations:

[Keeping Your Rabbit Safe From Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease - Biosecurity Recommendations - CDFA](#)

[How To Keep Your Clinic and Patients Safe from Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease - CDFA](#)

[General Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of RHDV Contaminated Premises – USDA](#)

RHD is a reportable disease in Los Angeles County, California, and in the United States in general. To report a case in Los Angeles County, complete the reporting form [here](#) and email to vet@ph.lacounty.gov or fax to 213-481-2375.

For more information on RHD and the current outbreak of RHDV2:

[Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease - CDFA](#)

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Frequently Asked Questions - CDFA

Quick Facts about Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease - CDFW

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Detected in California – Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Please call 213-288-7060 or email vet@ph.lacounty.gov if you have questions about RHD.

Sincerely,

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Please email vet@ph.lacounty.gov if you wish to unsubscribe or need other AHAN-related assistance.