



Last updated July 2023

CWD SURVEILLANCE AREA FAQs

How are CWD Surveillance Areas designated?

Surveillance areas are designated by county. Primary Surveillance Areas (PSA) are counties in which CWD has been detected. Secondary Surveillance Areas (SSA) are counties that are adjacent to or near the locations of CWD-positive deer in the PSA counties.

Should I shoot a sick looking deer because I suspect it is ill?

Not without first contacting the NC Wildlife Commission. If you see a deer that appears sick, call the NC Wildlife Helpline 866-318-2401 or contact your local [District Biologist](#) for advice. This allows a trained biologist to assess the animal's condition and make a decision based on symptoms and probable cause of the illness. If you harvest a deer that appears sick, you must still report the harvest using your Big Game Harvest Report Card.

Why is CWD sampling not mandatory all season long?

Deer harvest rates are not consistent throughout deer season and peak during gun season in November. Providing staffed check stations to accommodate mandatory sampling across Surveillance Areas requires extensive manpower and resources, which are both limited in availability. The NCWRC uses historical harvest rates to determine which weeks should be mandatory for testing to provide enough deer samples to inform CWD management. Hunters are encouraged to voluntarily submit samples from deer taken outside of the mandatory testing period at testing [testing drop-off stations](#) (freezers) or participating [Cervid Health Cooperators](#).

What should I do with the meat until I get my test results back?

The [CDC recommends](#) hunters strongly consider having deer that are harvested within CWD Surveillance Areas tested prior to consuming the meat. Until test results are returned meat can be frozen as rough un-processed quarters or as fully processed and packaged meat. **However, it is very important to label and separate each individual deer in your freezer until test results are received.** If your deer tests positive for CWD and you choose to discard the meat, the NCWRC will offer to collect and incinerate the meat for you..

[View my test results](#)

If I harvest a deer outside the Surveillance Areas, can I transport it through them?

Yes. However, you must first validate your harvest and it is [highly recommended](#) that you first register your deer through the [Big Game Harvest Reporting System](#) so that you have proof of harvest location while transporting the animal through Surveillance Areas.

Can feral swine still be baited in CWD Surveillance Areas?

Feral swine can only be baited from September 1st to January 1st. Baiting or feeding wildlife outside of these dates is illegal.

If you harvest a CWD-positive deer, does that count against your tags?

Yes. All harvested deer must be reported using your Big Game Harvest Report Card, whether they appear sick, injured, or healthy. Currently there is no process by which tags can be replaced for hunters who have harvested CWD positive deer. However, the NCWRC is aware of this concern and working on future alternatives.

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Can CWD infect other animals: dogs, cats, raccoons, coyotes, swine, etc.?

There is currently no evidence that CWD naturally occurs in any species outside of the cervid (deer) family. All native North American cervids including white-tailed deer, elk, mule deer, black-tailed deer, moose, and caribou are susceptible to CWD, as well as some species of exotic deer.

Can I still plant food plots if feeding is banned outside of deer season?

Yes. There are no restrictions on food plots in Surveillance Areas.

What should I do with my current mineral lick sites?

In Surveillance Areas it is illegal to place new salt or mineral in existing mineral sites or to establish new mineral sites. There is no requirement for removing existing salt or minerals that were placed before the salt and mineral lick ban was established in the Surveillance Area. While it is not required by rule, the best practice is to dig up and dispose of any contaminated soil that may still be attracting deer to the site.