Chronic Wasting Disease in Delaware Hunting Guide Addendum

What you need to know for the 2026/27 Hunting Season

What is Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)? Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a fatal, neurological illness affecting members of the deer family, including deer, elk, and moose. Currently, there is no scientific evidence that CWD can infect humans. However, public health agencies advise against consuming meat from animals that have tested positive or appear sick.

In Delaware, two deer harvested during the 2025/26 hunting season, both from Wildlife Management Zone 14 tested positive for CWD. For more information, visit **de.gov/cwd**.

CWD Emergency Regulations ***For the 2026/27 hunting season, the Secretary of DNREC has instituted the following regulations:***

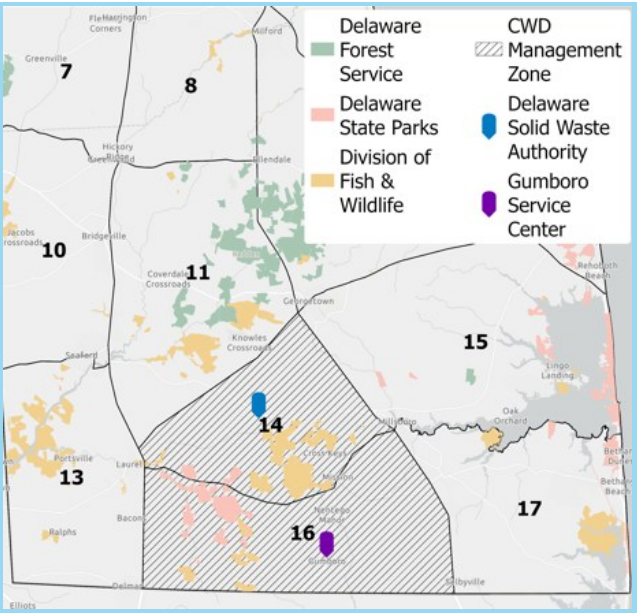
- We have designated a CWD Management Zone (CMZ) for disease management, made up of Wildlife Management Zones 14 and 16, based on the location of positive deer and likely deer dispersal.
- Within the CMZ, deer may not be attracted or hunted over bait. Statewide, urine-based lures may not be used.
- When open, all deer within the CMZ must be checked-in at Department-designated wildlife health stations within 24-hours of harvest (see below).
- Unless delivered to a taxidermist or game processor, anyone transporting whole or partial deer carcasses harvested from within the CMZ, shall dispose of all remaining deer carcass parts inside a plastic trash bag at least 2 mils thick (e.g., a contractor grade trash bag), or two bags if thinner (e.g., typically a kitchen trash bag), to then be disposed of with a waste management provider or a permitted landfill.
- Deer fawns within Sussex County may not be rehabilitated.

Mandatory Check-Stations within the CMZ

All deer within the CMZ must be brought to one of two mandatory check stations during the November General Firearm season. Sampling stations are open (Nov. 13-Nov.22, 8am-8pm).

Deer may be field dressed prior to being brought to the stations. Mandatory sampling is not required throughout the remainder of the hunting season, but voluntary samples may be submitted by hunters. *See back of this page for additional information.*

We will have two check stations, one located at Delaware Solid Waste Authority's Jones Crossroad Landfill, 28560 Landfill Ln, Georgetown, DE 19947 and one located at the Gumboro Service Center, 36944 Millsboro Hwy, Millsboro, DE 19966.



If you want to have your deer mounted, we will provide you with a self-sample kit to provide to your taxidermist, that we will collect.

How You Can Help!

CWD Testing Locations Statewide

For hunters interested in having their deer tested at no charge, deer heads may be dropped off in a designated chest freezer at any Delaware Hunters against Hunger location (see below). Results are typically available within 30-days of submission, often sooner.

Instructions for drop-off will be posted at each location.

Once your deer has been submitted, please visit:

de.gov/cwd/testing for results.

Delaware Hunters Against Hunger Locations and Updates

All deer donated to DHAH will be tested for CWD prior to distribution to charitable organizations, so all deer must have their head attached at the time of donation. A map of all cooler locations can be found at **de.gov/dhah**.

For the 2026/27 season, we are attempting to add several coolers, so check the website for updated locations.

November General Firearms Season

Voluntary Sampling at Venison Processors

For the 2026/27 general firearm season, DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife staff will be at the following venison processors:

- Dutch Neck Deer Processing
- Miller's Butcher Shop
- Johnson's Deer Cutting

If staff are present when you bring your deer, you will be asked to voluntary donate the head of your deer for sampling or take a voluntary sample kit to your taxidermist

CONTACT US

Report sick, injured or dead free-ranging deer at:

de.gov/reportsickwildlife

For more information on CWD, visit de.gov/cwd or scan the QR code below

Revision to the 2026/2027 Hunting and Trapping Guide

2026/2027 Hunting & Trapping Guide Cover Photo -"Wild Turkey" by April Doyle, featuring a wild turkey on Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge .