

Village of Tinley Park

News Release



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Cook County, state issue Tularemia FAQs

Cook County Animal Control and Dr. Connie Austin, state public health veterinarian and infectious disease epidemiologist, have provided the Village with a list of frequently asked questions regarding the Tularemia virus and how residents can safely remove dead wildlife from their property.

The information, which is available at www.tinleypark.org/animalcontrol, follows a statement yesterday by the Illinois State Public Health Laboratory confirming the presence of Tularemia in a dead rabbit discovered June 13 in the 7500 block of West 161st Place.

Austin said Tularemia, a rare disease with only one to 10 cases reported each year in Illinois, can be transmitted from direct skin contact with infected mammals (most often rabbits), from inhaling the organism (most often from running over a dead infected rabbit with a lawnmower), and from the bites of an infected tick or deer fly. Symptoms range from mild to life-threatening. All forms are accompanied by fever, which can be as high as 104 °F.

To safely remove dead wildlife from personal property, Austin recommends that residents wear gloves and pick up the animal, making sure to keep it away from their face, and place it in a plastic garbage bag. Residents should then double-bag the body and throw it into the trash.

Residents who believe they have been exposed to a dead rabbit or have directly handled a dead rabbit should contact their doctor.

Please be advised that the Tinley Park Police Department and Cook County Animal Control are not responsible for the removal of dead wildlife from private property.

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