

**We want to make sure you
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health alerts.

Dear Veterinary and Interested Colleagues,

Changes are coming to your Public Health Vet Update Newsletter!

In an effort to serve you better and distribute information more efficiently, we are moving to an online web delivery system called MailChimp. Beginning in 2017 you will receive all Public Health information via MailChimp. This automated platform allows for subscribers to select individual preferences and has enhanced viewing on smart phones and other mobile devices. When the transition is complete, we will no longer be able to blast fax communications.

In order for us to make this transition as smooth as possible, please subscribe or update your information by clicking [HERE](#). Also, share this link with others who may be interested!

Please send any feedback on this newsletter or questions regarding zoonotic disease to Beth Lipton at 206.263.8454 or beth.lipton@kingcounty.gov.

Beth Lipton, DVM MPH | Public Health Veterinarian

***Streptococcus equi subsp. zooepidemicus*: It's Zoonotic?**

S*treptococcus equi subsp. zooepidemicus* (*S. zooepidemicus*) is a zoonotic pathogen for persons in contact with horses. Human infections have also been traced to consumption of unpasteurized dairy products and exposure to ill dogs and infected guinea pigs; documented infections associated with *S. zooepidemicus* are often severe. *S. zooepidemicus* is considered an opportunistic commensal in horses, but it may also cause infections in domestic animals such as cattle, pigs, guinea pigs, dogs, and cats.

This spring, Public Health was notified of two persons who received a diagnosis of *S. zooepidemicus* infections, one of which was fatal. One of the infected persons (patient A) owns and operates a horse boarding and riding facility. The second person (patient B) was a previously healthy individual of older age (71 years) who was staying with the owner of the facility. Prior to the human diagnoses, a horse at the facility developed mucopurulent ocular and nasal discharge and lethargy. Nasal swabs of this ill horse and two other asymptomatic horses were culture positive for *S. zooepidemicus*.

Both Patient A and B had close contact with the ill horse (feeding, grooming, petting, and riding). The epidemiologic and laboratory evidence from this investigation linked the fatal *S. zooepidemicus* infection (patient B) to close contact with the ill horse. Patient B might have been at increased risk for invasive disease by *S. zooepidemicus*

because of her age and a possible antecedent upper respiratory infection.

Although *S. zooepidemicus* is a rare zoonotic pathogen in humans, older persons may be at increased risk for serious outcomes from infection; in 32 reported cases, the median age was 61 years (range = <1 to 83) with 7 deaths (case-fatality rate = 22%). For more details about this outbreak in a published CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/index.html> search "S. zooepidemicus."

Public Health, in coordination with the WA Dept. of Health and the WA Dept. of Agriculture, has developed an Infection Control Plan (ICP) in an effort to prevent future transmission of zoonotic pathogens at horse facilities. The aim is to provide guidelines on best practices to limit the spread of disease within these facilities and to the public. The ICP outlines general infection control principles and practices and includes guidelines to isolate potentially contagious horses from the public as well as other animals on the property.

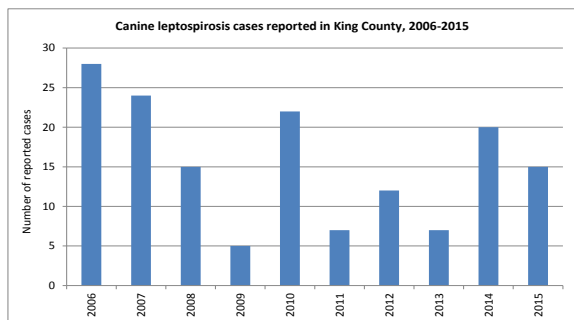
The ICP for horse facilities is available at: kingcounty.gov/vet. In the future, we plan to distribute this plan and an explanatory letter to King County horse facilities that have been identified as having some public access (i.e. boarding, breeding, riding facilities, etc.). Please be aware that your clients may have questions about *S. zooepidemicus* or seek advice from you about implementing the ICP.



Canine Leptospirosis: What's the Latest?

Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection of zoonotic importance caused by the bacteria *Leptospira interrogans*; in fact, the CDC reports it may be the most widely transmitted re-emerging zoonotic disease worldwide. Wildlife reservoirs maintain bacterial presence in nature, but vaccination of household pets and livestock is important for reducing human exposure.

The last reported human case of leptospirosis in King County was in 2012, with exposure most likely outside of the county during outdoor activities. **Canine cases are reportable to Public Health.** In 2015, there were 15 canine cases reported (confirmed and suspected) in King County and 18 in WA State, all in Western WA.



In 2015, affected dogs ranged in age (4 to 11 years), breed, and size. Four cases had a history of being vaccinated against leptospirosis, with two cases very recently vaccinated. Symptom onset occurred throughout the year, but with higher frequency in the rainy seasons of winter and early spring. The majority of cases were reported in Seattle and other large cities, and many cases lacked what are considered traditional high risk exposures. Titers from all cases combined reached at least 1:800 for six of the seven common/frequently tested serovars. A titer of at least 1:800 is considered

diagnostic for surveillance purposes in cases with acute onset of compatible clinical signs and no history of recent vaccination. The most common titers were to autumnalis, bratislava, pomona, icterohaemorrhagiae, and grippityphosa; cases did not have any titers reach 1:800 for hardjo. Evidence suggests that seroreactivity in dogs to autumnalis may actually represent cross-reactivity to other serovars, as it has not been isolated from dogs in the U.S.

Distribution in recently reported cases suggests a possible shift in which pets and activities are generally considered “at risk”, and vaccination of a broader population may be a topic worth discussing with pet owners. As always our data depend on diligent veterinary staff like you! Thank you for your reporting efforts of confirmed and suspected cases. Lab results, including acute and convalescent titers when available, should be submitted with the case report.

Click [HERE](#) for a link to the report form.

Selected Notifiable Conditions (# of cases reported)	King County		WA State	
	Yearly average, 2013-15	2016 through 9/1	Yearly average, 2013-15	2016 through 9/1
Human Cases:				
Brucellosis	1	0	3	0
Coccidiomycosis (Valley Fever)	4	2	19	13
Cryptococcus gattii	1	0	6	3
Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome	0	0	0.7	0
Leptospirosis	0	0	0.7	0
Lyme disease	7	5	19	18
Plague	0	0	0	0
Psittacosis	0	0	0.3	0
Q Fever	0	0	2	5
Rabies suspected exposures	101	99	258	244
Tularemia	0.7	0	4	0
West Nile virus	0.3	0	12	6
Animal Surveillance:				
Positive rabies in bats tested	3	1	12	15
Positive rabies in other mammals ^A	0	0	0.3	0
Cryptococcus gattii	2	0	5	0
West Nile virus: mammals	0	0	14	11
West Nile virus: birds	0	0	2	1
West Nile virus: mosquitos	0	0	85	82

Note: 2015 and 2016 counts are preliminary and may change as case information is reviewed and/or more cases are reported.

^A a cat in Jefferson County tested positive in 2015

CE Opportunity: From your Desk or at Home!

Want to learn more about the importance of zoonotic diseases such as plague, tularemia, or rabies, and the role that veterinarians can play in their prevention? The Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) at Iowa State Univ. College of Veterinary Medicine is offering the online course **Zoonoses: Protecting People and Their Pets**. The course is open until November 27, and can be accessed at any time and completed at your own pace.

The course is approved for 10 RACE hours of continuing education for veterinary professionals. Dr. Glenda Dvorak, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, Assistant Director, CFSPH, emphasizes that “Partnerships between medical, public health and veterinary professionals are needed to raise awareness, enhance detection, and promote prevention of zoonotic diseases to protect the health of people and pets.”

Cost to register is \$125, which includes the textbook (a \$70 value). To find out more and to register, visit <http://zoonoses.info>.

**Have a Spare Moment?
Do a Card Sort to Improve our Website!**

<http://ows.io/os/e88psi61>

Public Health needs your input! We are in the process of improving our website design and navigation for veterinary professionals as well as other providers and the general public. The goal is a more user-centered site.

Please visit the above website to take part in a fun, simple card sorting task to give your feedback on veterinary and related topics. The task takes about 10 minutes to complete. Please share this tool with others by **November 11!**