



King County Vet-News

from Public Health – Seattle & King County

Dear Veterinary Colleagues,

Thank you to all practices who participated in the quick phone survey regarding your contact information and preferences! We received information from almost all King County practices; we estimate there are just over 200. We now have a database of contact information to use for twice yearly emailed and faxed newsletters, and veterinary public health alerts as needed.

Survey results (of 189 practices) include:

- 31% of practices are in Seattle, no other city/town has greater than 7% of practices
- 30% of practices have one veterinarian, 24% have two; 18% have three, 28% have four or more
- 96% of practices see small animals; 17% see rodents/rabbits; 14% see mixed animals; and ≤3% see large animals, exotics or birds (note: totals do not add to 100% as practices could answer more than one animal type)
- 42% of practices prefer fax communication; 41% prefer email; 17% like both
- 23% of practices have used the Public Health – Seattle & King County website in the past year; 49% have not; and 29% did not know about the website.



Dr. Hanne Thiede, a veterinarian and senior epidemiologist, who has provided back-up for the Public Health Veterinarian for several years retired on August 31 after 24 years with Public Health. She will be greatly missed!

Please send any feedback on this newsletter, or questions regarding zoonotic disease, to beth.lipton@kingcounty.gov or call (206) 263-8454. Thank you for your continued partnership and efforts in protecting the public's health.

Sincerely, *Beth Lipton DVM MPH, Public Health Veterinarian*

Germ, Outbreaks, and You

During 2015, outbreaks of various *Salmonella* strains that resulted in ill and hospitalized Washingtonians were linked to cucumbers, whole pigs for barbeque/pork products, frozen raw tuna, live backyard poultry, and pet crested geckos. At Public Health we also saw *Salmonella* cases linked to pet bearded dragons and hedgehogs, animals previously associated with national outbreaks. Each year in the US, ~42,000 cases of salmonellosis are reported, mostly causing diarrhea and other gastrointestinal symptoms but also arthritis and blood infections. Children, especially those under 5, are most at risk of infection; children, pregnant women, certain elderly people, and those with weakened immune systems are most likely to have severe infections. Non-traditional pets, pet food, and baby poultry are important sources of *Salmonella* infections. Many non-traditional pets also pose other disease risks. Veterinarians can provide advice on selection of appropriate pets as well as disease prevention information for clients and families.

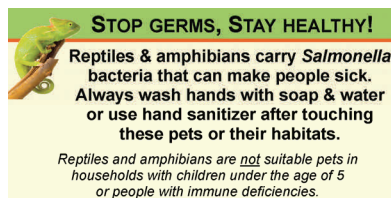
Resources to check out:

[CDC's Healthy Pets Healthy People](#), [American Academy of Pediatric's article: children and animal exposures](#), [Public Health's website: high risk populations for zoonotic disease](#).



Public Health's Pet Business Program

Did you know that pet businesses in King County need to be permitted with Public Health? Public Health and the King County Board of Health regulate pet businesses such as pet shops, commercial kennels, pet daycares, pet grooming facilities, mobile pet grooming facilities, animal shelters, poultry retailers and pet food retailers. Public Health inspectors conduct inspections of new facilities before opening for business, and existing permitted facilities are inspected annually. Inspections focus on regulatory requirements and prevention education and resources, including providing signage and pamphlets. Among the regulatory requirements are point-of-sale disease prevention information for people purchasing reptiles, amphibians, baby poultry, psittacine birds, and raw or partially cooked pet food; a written infection control plan (ICP) for most types of businesses; animal care requirements; and sanitation, disinfection, waste disposal, food storage, and facility standards. In addition to education and ensuring regulatory compliance, Public Health inspectors also investigate complaints from consumers about sanitation



and related issues. See the full pet business code at [King County Board of Health Title 8](#).

Are you interested in learning more about Communicable Diseases in King County?

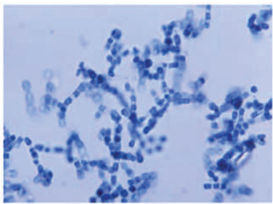
You can subscribe to *Epi-Log & VacScene*, the quarterly online newsletter produced by the Public Health Communicable Disease Epidemiology & Immunization Section. Each issue has zoonotic disease topics! Subscribe at: [Epi-Log & VacScene](#)



An emerging disease in Washington: Coccidioidomycosis

Coccidioidomycosis (Valley Fever) is an environmentally-acquired fungal infection that can infect people, many species of mammals, and some reptiles. It is primarily a respiratory disease. Most infections in people are mild or asymptomatic, but severe or fatal illness also occurs, especially in the elderly or immunocompromised. Among animals, coccidioidomycosis is most commonly diagnosed in dogs, which have a spectrum of illness similar to humans. Cases have also been reported in llamas, cats, horses, and a wide variety of other domestic and wild mammals. The fungus is endemic in the soil of the southwestern US, Mexico, and parts of Central and South America. Recent investigations identified human cases exposed in southcentral WA State (Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla and Yakima counties). Environmental investigations by WA State Department of Health (DOH) isolated the fungus from soil samples taken in these counties. Genotypes from the soil isolate were identical to a clinical isolate from one of the patients, confirming a local exposure. A review of pathology reports (2001-10) by the WA Animal Disease Diagnostic Lab noted a few animal cases suspected of being acquired in WA.

There are two species of *Coccidioides*, *C. immitis* and *C. posadasii*. The life cycle of the fungi is complicated. Arthroconidia (a spore form) are produced by the mold form growing in the environment and dispersed by the wind.



Hyphae with arthrospores
CDC.gov

Arthroconidia are infectious for people and animals, usually infection is by inhalation. Aerosolization of arthroconidia increases when contaminated soil is disturbed by humans (e.g. construction sites) or by natural causes (e.g. earthquakes or dust storms). After infection, the spores form into non-infectious

spherules. As each spherule enlarges, endospores develop inside it. The spherule eventually ruptures and releases the endospores, which can spread to other parts of the body in the blood or lymph, causing disseminated disease. People and animals with disseminated disease have transmitted Coccidioidomycosis on very rare occasions.

In animals, primary pulmonary infections usually become symptomatic one to four weeks after exposure, while disseminated disease can occur months to years later. Diagnosing coccidioidomycosis can be challenging and may require multiple tests including cytology, histopathology, culture and serology. Radiographs can be helpful to identify pulmonary lesions and hilar lymphadenopathy with respiratory disease and lytic and proliferative bone lesions with bone disease. Antifungal drugs that have been used in dogs and cats include amphotericin B and azole drugs such as ketoconazole, itraconazole and fluconazole. Most animals are treated for at least 6-12 months; in disseminated disease, treatment is often continued for one to several years. Relapses can be seen. Veterinarians should consider coccidioidomycosis in their patients with clinically compatible illnesses, especially those that live in or traveled to southcentral WA.

In order to better understand this emerging disease in WA and to aid in identification of locally-acquired infections, DOH has asked laboratories to submit all *Coccidioides* isolates from WA State residents (human); these go to the CDC for sequencing to determine if an isolate most resembles strains from WA or the southwestern US. Also, in WA coccidioidomycosis is a notifiable condition in people and in animals (see [WA State Dept of Health on Coccidioidomycosis](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-002-epitrends2014-09.pdf)).

For more information: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-002-epitrends2014-09.pdf> and <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/coccidioidomycosis.pdf>

Reduce clutter for a safer business

It's a good time of year to go through your supply closets and storage areas and dispose of unused chemicals/cleaners and unwanted or damaged items. Small business hazardous waste disposal is available in King County and is free of charge for qualifying businesses. For details, visit the Business section of the [King County Local Hazardous Waste Management Program](http://www.kingcounty.gov/Departments/Environment/Programs/SmallBusinessHazardousWasteManagementProgram.aspx) or call the Business Waste Line at (206) 263-8899. Fluorescent lights contain mercury and must be recycled. Do not dispose of fluorescent lamps or bulbs in the garbage. For a list of lamp recyclers and more information, visit [Local Hazardous Waste Management-Mercury](http://www.kingcounty.gov/Departments/Environment/Programs/LocalHazardousWasteManagement-Mercury.aspx) or call (206) 263-8899.



How many cases are reported?

Selected Notifiable Conditions (# of cases reported)	King County		WA State	
	Yearly average, 2012-14	2015 through 6/30	Yearly average, 2012-14	2015 through 6/30
Human Cases:				
Brucellosis	0.3	3	1.7	3
Cryptococcus gattii	0.7	0	6.3	2
Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome	0	0	1	1
Leptospirosis	0.3	0	0.7	1
Lyme disease	7	2	16.3	4
Plague	0	0	0	0
Psittacosis	0	0	0.3	0
Q Fever	0.3	1	2.3	2
Rabies suspected exposures	77.3	17	255	76
Tularemia	0.7	0	4.7	2
West Nile virus*	0.3	0	5.7	0
Animal Surveillance:				
Positive rabies in bats tested	3	0	12	2
Cryptococcus gattii	2.3	0	6	2
West Nile virus: mammals*	0	0	2.7	0
West Nile virus: birds*	0	0	0	2
West Nile virus: mosquitos*	0	0	34.3	5

Note: 2014 and 2015 counts are preliminary and may change as case information is reviewed and/or more cases are reported.

*case counts as of 9/30 are as follows: human 23, mammal 31, bird 7, mosquito 157

Your ticks wanted!

DOH would love to partner with you to collect and test ticks you find on animals! They will provide you with the collection kits and coordinate pick-ups. Contact David Kangiser at David.Kangiser@doh.wa.gov or call (360) 236-3064 to get kits.

DOH is also conducting a **survey through Oct. 30th** about encounters with ticks on dogs. Anyone who owns/works with dogs can take the survey, including your clients! Go to: www.doh.wa.gov/surveys/dogtick.

To help advertise the survey, download, print and post the below poster in your lobby:

[Poster for 8.5x11](#)
[Poster for 5.5x8.5](#)

