

News for King County Pet Businesses

Dear Pet Business Operator,

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe it's already 2018! The Pet Business Program has undergone a staffing change with a valued inspector taking a promotion into another program last summer. A new inspector has joined the program and recently started conducting inspections. In 2017, we processed 32 plan review applications for new businesses. As we start 2018, we have 408 facilities with 497 permits on record. This year we plan to begin reviewing the Pet Business code for potential updates. Stay tuned to be involved in this process.

Two Health & Environmental Investigators will be visiting and assisting pet businesses this year: *Garrett Turner: 206.263.1877 or garrett.turner@kingcounty.gov* and *Leah Helms: 206.263.8450 or leah.helms@kingcounty.gov*. Feel free to contact an inspector with any questions you have. You can also call the Environmental Health Services front desk at 206.263.9566.

We are dedicated to the protection of public health and the environment by working to keep both people and animals healthy. Thank you for your cooperation in protecting the public's health by complying with code requirements and contacting us with questions or feedback.

Sincerely, *the Pet Business Program*

Reminders about permits

- The permit cycle runs from March 1, 2018 to February 28, 2019. **All permit fees are due by the end of this February.** Please submit your on-time payment before we begin processing late fees. You can pay on-line at: kingcounty.gov/health/portal
- All pet business classifications and fees remain the same as 2017.
- Permits aren't transferrable between owners; new owners must apply for a new permit.
- If you plan to open a new location, move or remodel, you may need to complete a plan review. A new facility inspection must be done prior to opening, so plan ahead!
- You can find plan review applications, signage, brochures and much more at: kingcounty.gov/petbusiness

Bat encounters show why rabies vaccination is required and important

Maintaining up to date rabies vaccination status is a legal requirement for all dogs, cats, and ferrets in WA State. Additionally, the Pet Business Code requires for all dogs, cats and ferrets that are four months or older to be currently vaccinated against rabies in pet shops, pet daycare, commercial kennels, grooming facilities, and animal shelters. Failure to keep pets up to date on rabies vaccination leaves pets unprotected from potential exposure to a suspected or confirmed rabid animal, and can put the public's health at risk.

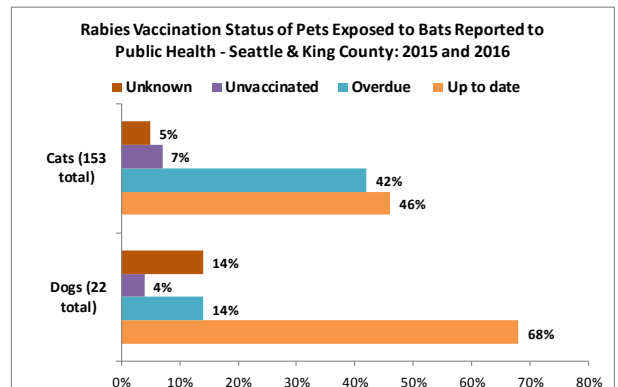


Bats are the only known reservoir for rabies in Washington. Frequent pet exposures to bats, especially during summer and early fall months, carry potential for transmission of rabies virus. Pet exposures to bats are reportable to Public Health, and we give recommendations for rabies vaccination, monitor observation/confinement periods, and help coordinate rabies testing of the bat when possible. To obtain a rough estimate of rabies vaccination compliance, we analyzed data collected from cases of cats and dogs reported to Public Health after exposure to bats during 2015 and 2016. Our data showed that **only 46% of cats exposed to bats were up to date on rabies vaccination, while 42% were overdue for a booster vaccine, and 7% were unvaccinated** (5% had an unknown vaccination status). Dogs had higher vaccination coverage than cats, although

significantly fewer dogs were exposed to bats. **A total of 68% of dogs were up to date on rabies vaccination, 14% were overdue, and 4% were unvaccinated** (14% had an unknown vaccination status).

These findings show a clear need for improved compliance with the rabies vaccine law among pet owners, particularly for cats. Low vaccination compliance in cats is especially troubling because they are much more likely to be exposed to bats as a result of their varied lifestyle, which may include living partially or completely outdoors unsupervised. Cats are also more

inclined to prey upon bats and catch them effectively. Pet businesses can help promote rabies prevention by following code requirements with respect to rabies vaccination and educating clients on the importance of rabies vaccination.



Backyard poultry *Salmonella* cases increase each year

Live poultry, especially baby poultry, commonly carry *Salmonella* germs and still appear healthy and clean. People can get *Salmonella* from contact with poultry or their environments. These germs can contaminate a bird's body and the area where they are displayed or housed, such as cage/coop surfaces, bedding, and water/food containers. Each year, there are multi-state outbreaks of human infection with *Salmonella* linked to handling live poultry purchased from agricultural feed stores and mail-order hatcheries. **The 2017 outbreaks saw the largest number of illnesses linked to backyard poultry ever recorded: 1,120 cases in 48 states, with 22% of cases hospitalized and one death.**

Infection with *Salmonella* most commonly causes diarrhea and other gastrointestinal symptoms but can also cause arthritis, blood infections and even death. Children under the age of 5 are most likely to get infected and should not have contact with baby poultry. Young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems are most likely to have severe infections. Preventing *Salmonella* can be accomplished by good hand hygiene and proper cleaning and disinfection of animal enclosures and environments.

Due to the risk of *Salmonella* infection, the Pet Business Code requires that businesses selling live poultry do the following to help protect employees and customers. We provide required educational materials and they are also posted on our website.

- 🍷 Provide an educational flyer to customers purchasing live poultry
- 🍷 Place educational posters in clear view in the areas where birds are displayed
- 🍷 Provide hand washing stations or hand sanitizer next to poultry display areas and request that customers wash their hands right after leaving the poultry display area
- 🍷 Have an infection control plan to guide effective sanitation and disease prevention measures

People with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for zoonotic disease, such as *Salmonella* infection, or for more serious illness if infected:

- people on cancer treatment or other immune-suppressing medicines
- organ transplant recipients
- people with AIDS
- children under 5 years old
- adults age 65 and older
- pregnant women



People at higher risk for zoonotic disease should avoid:

- Reptiles & amphibians (lizards, snakes, frogs, turtles)
- Baby poultry (chicks & ducklings)
- Non-traditional pets like hedgehogs
- Sick animals, especially those with diarrhea
- **Pregnant women** should avoid contact with rodents due to the risk of LCMV (lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus)

Continuing to keep canine influenza away!

Although there have been no recently confirmed cases of H3N2 canine influenza virus (CIV) in Washington State,* other states saw outbreak activity this past spring and summer, particularly associated with dog shows. Additionally, the first cases of H3N2 CIV in Canada were recently reported after two dogs were imported from Asia in late December 2017.



H3N2 CIV is highly contagious and essentially no dogs have immunity, meaning that dogs of any breed, age or health status will likely be infected if exposed to the virus. Dogs most at risk are those that participate in group events, such as dog daycare, or are housed in communal facilities, such as shelters or kennels. Cats also rarely become infected with H3N2 CIV. Cats in shelters are the highest risk group; housing cats in separate rooms from dogs reduces risk. Vaccination against H3N2 CIV is effective – it may not completely prevent infection but decreases risk and disease is likely to be milder and of shorter duration. Two doses of vaccine, two to three weeks apart, are necessary for optimum immune response; immunity is fully established one to two weeks after the second dose.

H3N2 CIV is spread by direct contact with a sick dog or contact with an environment or people contaminated with the virus. Coughing dogs produce virus-containing mists that can travel 20 feet or more in the air which can contribute to a rapid increase in coughing dogs. Animal workers and volunteers with contaminated hands and clothing transmit the virus between dogs and to dogs outside of a facility. H3N2 CIV cannot be diagnosed based on signs or symptoms alone as there are several other respiratory infections that can appear similar.

Routine infection control precautions are key to preventing spread of viral disease within facilities, which include isolation, adequate PPE, cleaning and disinfection, and routine infection control plan (ICP) use. We are able to assist you with developing infection control recommendations in your facility.

If you have concerns about respiratory illness in your facility, please call us right away. Developing a plan to address infection control and taking quick action can reduce the impact to the animals and the facility.

FAQs for pet businesses: kingcounty.gov/dogflu

Koret Shelter Medicine Program: sheltermedicine.com/library/resources/canine-influenza

U. of Florida's FAQs for Shelters & Rescue Groups:

https://vetmed-maddie.sites.medinfo.ufl.edu/files/2017/05/H3N2-CIV-FAQs-for-Shelters-and-Rescue-Groups_.pdf

*There were four confirmed cases of H3N2 CIV in King County in January/February 2016; Public Health is not aware of other cases