

Dead geese in Caledon test positive for bird flu]

By Zachary Roman

Test results have confirmed that dead geese found in a Bolton stormwater pond died of Avian Influenza.

On March 30, the Town of Caledon announced that the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) discovered the dead geese had avian influenza, which is commonly known as bird flu.

Caledon's Municipal Law Enforcement division first followed up on reports of the dead geese on March 17.

Dr. Nicholas Brandon, Acting Medical Officer of Health at Peel Public Health, said the risk to humans from avian influenza remains very low. This is because most cases of human avian flu have been linked back to handling infected poultry or their droppings.

Residents are asked to follow the recommended guidance to limit the spread of avian flu and protect the health and safety of residents and pets, said Brandon.

Recommended guidance includes: Not handling sick or dead wildlife; keeping pets on leash and away from sick or dead wildlife; stopping the use of bird feeders and bird baths; and keeping cats indoors.

The Feather Board Command Centre, which represents Ontario's poultry commodity boards, said there's no risk to anyone from Canadian poultry products.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, it's natural for wild birds to carry avian influenza viruses. Some birds can be infected and still appear healthy, while others may succumb to their illness. Avian Flu has the potential to spread to domestic poultry and mammals such as foxes who may eat infected birds.

Caledon residents are being asked to report any sick or dead wildlife by calling 311. Anyone with questions about sick or dead wildlife found on their property can call the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative at 1-866-673-4781.