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## From Dr. Bob Ehlenfeldt, Wisconsin State Veterinarian:



It's been a long winter, but it looks like spring is finally here to stay in Wisconsin.

I hate to trample on the tulips, but that means it's time to refocus your thoughts to warm-weather hazards. Keep them in mind as you examine animals large and small, and keep reminding your clients.

The first thing that comes to mind is insect-vector diseases: West Nile virus, equine encephalitis, Lyme disease, and heartworm, to name the most common ones. There are highly effective vaccines available for the first three, and preventive treatments to protect dogs and cats from heartworm. Encourage your clients to take advantage of what's available. And remember that all strains of equine encephalitis are [reportable diseases](#).

Rabies continues to be a threat, and spring/summer is high season. We're getting several calls a week about pets crossing paths with skunks, raccoons, opossums and bats. The wild critters that can carry rabies are out and about, looking for food and mates and territory. In the past few years, we've also had a number of quarantines when cows and horses were exposed to rabies - it's not just a small animal issue. Keep those rabies vaccinations current and call us (608-224-4872) if you have any question at all about the proper procedure when you see an animal that's been potentially exposed.

If your clients move livestock, make sure they're aware of the risks of moving animals in hot weather and that they take steps to alleviate those risks. For your pet-owner clients, it never hurts to reiterate that there is no safe way to leave an animal in a car. Just last week, we had a report here in the Madison area of someone who left a dog in a car on an 80-degree day. As if that weren't risky enough, the dog managed to put the car in neutral and it rolled around in the parking lot and collided with another vehicle.

But hey, the snow is gone, so have a nice summer!



## Free RFID tags available

Veterinarians and livestock farmers can get free RFID tags as long as supplies last. You do not need an RFID reader or

computer software to participate.

In a pilot program, three Wisconsin veterinarians have provided this service to their clients in the past year. Now the program is expanding. Veterinarians can receive RFID button tags as an alternative to traditional orange metal calfhood vaccination tags. Unlike the metal tags, though, these tags will be used for many purposes, including faster DHIA milk recording, potential discounts and easier recordkeeping for breed registries, and in tracing and managing disease outbreaks. Veterinarians can receive up to 1,000 tags at a time. Veterinarians can sign up by contacting Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium (WLIC) at 1-888-808-1910 or emailing [info@wiid.org](mailto:info@wiid.org).

Individual producers can also receive tags:

- Dairy producers should contact their DHIA representatives.
- Beef and pork producers should call or email WLIC: 1-888-808-1910, [info@wiid.org](mailto:info@wiid.org).
- Deer and elk farmers should contact Karen Torvell, 608-224-4896, [karen.torvell@wi.gov](mailto:karen.torvell@wi.gov).
- Sheep and goat producers should call the USDA-Veterinary Services office in Madison, 608-662-0600, ext. 5.

The tags will be recorded before you receive them. You will receive a spreadsheet of the numbers, where you will record the premises ID and location where the tag is applied and date of application, and fax the information to WLIC. The info will then be entered into the USDA database.

To read how one veterinarian used RFID tags or run cost-benefit analyses, visit [WLIC's website](#).

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium received funding from the USDA to provide the tags.

### **New dog seller law moving ahead**

As you're probably aware, we have a new law that will require inspection and licensing for wholesale and retail dog sellers, as well as shelters and rescues. The law will take effect June 1, 2011. Between now and then, an advisory committee will be working with staff in the Animal Health Division to recommend specifics to flesh out the law passed by the legislature - standards of care for animals, facility standards, and similar requirements. We will use the recommendations to write administrative rules. We expect to take those rules to public hearing and take written comments on them by this fall. The law applies to:

- Dog breeders who sell dogs either to other distributors or directly to consumers if they sell at least 25 dogs a year and those dogs come from at least 3 litters
- Out-of-state dog dealers, non-Wisconsin residents who bring 25 or more dogs a year into Wisconsin for sale
- Pet stores and other retailers that sell at least 25 dogs a year
- Dog auctions that offer at least 50 dogs for sale a year
- Non-profit animal shelters that shelter at least 25 dogs a year
- Animal control facilities that contract with a city, village, town or county
- Flea markets and other temporary markets where dogs are sold

The first meeting will be April 21. For more information about the law and the committee, visit our [website](#).

### **Pesticide permit requirement lifted for veterinary clinics**

Wisconsin veterinarians and board-certified veterinary technicians no longer need permits to apply pesticides or direct clients in their use, and clinics do not need permits to repackage pesticides, following legislative action last year.

In this context, "pesticides" are the products you use to prevent, control



*Photo courtesy of CDC*

or eliminate pests that bother large and small animals - primarily fleas, ticks, mites and flies. Until now, two-year permits were required from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

The law did not change for other clinic employees who apply these products. They still need to be certified and licensed, so you may opt to have only veterinarians and board-certified technicians apply these products.

For more information, contact Bonnie Bruns at 608-224-4548 or [bonnie.bruns@wi.gov](mailto:bonnie.bruns@wi.gov). More information is also available on our [website](#).

### Training opportunities

**Accreditation:** The summer accreditation seminar will be Thursday, June 24, with registration at 1 p.m. and the seminar running 1:30-5 p.m. in Room 106 of the State Agriculture Building, Madison. ([Map](#)) Accreditation is necessary to do regulatory work, such as signing certificates of veterinary inspection and official disease testing, and you must attend a seminar in order to be accredited. If you were previously accredited in a different state, but now practice in Wisconsin, you must be accredited here. *Preregistration is necessary.* Contact Marla Kieler at 608-662-0614 or [marla.m.kieler@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:marla.m.kieler@aphis.usda.gov).

**TB certification:** This year's CFT certification seminar is scheduled 1-4 p.m. Wednesday, July 14 in Room 106 of the State Agriculture Building, Madison. ([Map](#)) . This training is required for veterinarians last certified in 2007, so their certification expires this year; newly licensed veterinarians; and others who are seeking certification for the first time. The certification will be good until 2013. There is no charge and preregistration is not necessary. For more information, contact Margie Proost, 608-224-4877, [margaret.proost@wi.gov](mailto:margaret.proost@wi.gov).

### A reminder about accreditation

Remember that the accreditation system is changing. If you are already accredited, your accreditation will expire unless you reapply by Aug. 2. For complete information, visit the [accreditation web site](#) at USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services.

### Updating the rules

We are just starting the process of updating some of our animal health administrative rules -- something we do periodically to be sure they keep up with what's going on in the world.

We are updating:

ATCP 10 - dealing with **animal diseases and movement**

ATCP 12 - dealing with **animal markets, dealers and truckers**

ATCP 15 - dealing with **humane officer training and certification**

Right now we are working on the "hearing draft," the version that we take to public hearings and send out for written comments. We hope to finish that by June, take it to the Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection for its blessing, and then hold public hearings around the state by late summer.

If you have thoughts about what changes we need to make in these rules, please let us know as we're writing the hearing draft. You can call Melissa Mace, 608-224-4883, or [email](#) her.

### News you can use...

You may have heard a story in the news about a Wisconsin man accused of using veterinary drugs to induce a miscarriage in his pregnant girlfriend. As the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association has cautioned its members, the story raises a number of concerns for veterinarians especially in an era of information "going viral" via the Internet.

The drugs involved in this case were a prostaglandin and oxytocin. They are labeled for use by a veterinarian or by order of a veterinarian. One fear is that word will spread that these drugs are readily available on farms and in veterinary offices. There is some anecdotal evidence that this is happening already, although it's questionable how widespread it is to date.

The take-home lesson is to keep an eye on your supplies. Control access in your own office. When you provide these drugs to clients for on-farm use, emphasize that they also need to control access. Be aware of the possibility of break-ins, should these drugs become a hot item on the black market, and take steps to be sure your office and your drug supplies are secure.

### **Help for Haitian animals**

January's earthquake in Haiti has largely dropped out of the news, but it will clearly be a years-long relief and rebuilding effort there. That includes efforts to help animals. The Animal Relief Coalition, supported by the AVMA, is at work there. You can keep track of their efforts:

[http://www.avma.org/news/Haiti\\_earthquake/](http://www.avma.org/news/Haiti_earthquake/).

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