

# Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 8, 2008

## FEEDING DEER IS BANNED

GRAND HAVEN, MI, September 8, 2008: In the wake the announcement that Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been confirmed in a privately-owned white-tailed deer in Kent County, there has been a ban placed on all feeding of deer in the Lower Peninsula. DNR conservation officers and local officials have stepped up surveillance and enforcement efforts on feeding. Feeding unnaturally congregate deer into close contact, thus increasing the transmission of contagious diseases.

The City of Grand Haven **STRONGLY** urges all residents **NOT** to feed the deer. Besides risk of CWD contamination, feeding deer supports an expanded herd size that is larger than the natural habitat can sustain which increases the risk of vehicle/deer crashes and other nuisance issues. Providing a food source encourages deer to congregate, shifting their daily activity closer to the feeding area and leads to increased conflicts between deer and their human neighbors.

Current evidence suggests that CWD is transmitted through infectious, self-multiplying proteins contained in saliva and other fluids of infected animals. Susceptible animals can acquire CWD by direct exposure to these fluids or also from contaminated environments. Once contaminated, research suggests that soil can remain a source of infection for long periods of time, making CWD a particularly difficult disease to eradicate.

Infected animals display abnormal behaviors, loss of bodily functions and a progressive weight loss. Currently, there is no live animal test for CWD, and infected animals often show no signs of illness for years in spite of being infectious for other animals. DNR officials reminded citizens that the fatal neurological disease, which creates spongy lesions in the infected animal's brain, can be spread to deer, elk and moose but does not affect other animals. Additionally, there is no evidence that CWD poses a risk to humans, nor is there evidence that the disease can be transmitted to humans.

For the long term health of the deer herd, refrain from feeding the deer and keep other food sources (such as bird food) out of the deer's reach. If you have questions or concerns, please call the City Manager's Office at 847-4888 or email Lisa Sutterfield at [lsutterfield@grandhaven.org](mailto:lsutterfield@grandhaven.org). For additional Contacts, please call Dr. Adam J. Kantrovich, County Extension Director, Ottawa Co., Michigan State University Extension, 333 Clinton Street, Grand Haven, MI 49417 at 616-846-8250 or [akantrov@msu.edu](mailto:akantrov@msu.edu). More information about CWD is available on the State of Michigan's Emerging Diseases Web site at [www.michigan.gov/chronicwastingdisease](http://www.michigan.gov/chronicwastingdisease)

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