



**SD ANIMAL INDUSTRY BOARD**  
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**NEWS RELEASE – CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE**  
**Dustin Oedekoven, DVM, State Veterinarian**  
**March 20, 2019**

PIERRE, S.D. – Chronic wasting disease (CWD) has been identified in a captive elk in Clark County, South Dakota. State Veterinarian Dr. Dustin Oedekoven says the owner of the 21-month old female elk noticed the animal was ill and contacted his veterinarian, who submitted samples to the Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (ADRDL) at South Dakota State University in Brookings. The United States Department of Agriculture’s National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, IA, later confirmed positive test results for the fatal disease.

CWD is a progressive neurologic disease of deer, elk, and moose (cervidae) caused by an abnormal prion protein in the brain of affected animals. It can be transmitted to other cervids through saliva, urine, feces, and other bodily fluids. The disease is not known to affect humans and is not transmissible to other livestock species. CWD is endemic in free-ranging deer and elk in and around the Black Hills, and was last diagnosed in captive elk in S.D. in 2001. Dr. Oedekoven says that state and federal animal health officials are working together with the owner of the affected herd to investigate this disease and mitigate further infection. South Dakota wildlife officials have been notified and will assess potential impact to wildlife species and consider the potential for surveillance of free ranging cervids in the area.

The South Dakota Animal Industry Board permits the possession of captive non-domestic mammals, including cervidae, within the state. The Board required mandatory CWD testing of all permitted cervids mortalities from 1997 until 2012, at which time testing became voluntary under the state's USDA approved voluntary CWD herd certification program. The affected herd does not participate in the voluntary program.

\*OEDEKOVEN (OH’ dih koh ven)