



NEW WORLD SCREWWORMS (NWS)

WHAT TEXAS PET OWNERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

New World Screwworms (NWS) are moving northward through Mexico toward the Texas border. NWS flies lay eggs in wounds or skin openings of mammals and birds. NWS can cause severe tissue damage, infections and even death if left untreated. The flies can infest even small breaks in the skin, like scratches, insect bites or surgical incisions.

NWS is often associated with livestock, but pets and wildlife also are at risk, especially strays, whose wounds may go unnoticed. NWS also can infect humans.



WHAT PET OWNERS SHOULD WATCH FOR

- Any wound, no matter how small. Check wounds regularly for unusual swelling or discharge.
- Foul odor. Infested wounds have a very distinctive, strong smell.
- Behavioral changes. Pets may experience pain, licking or chewing at a wound, loss of appetite and lethargy.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT NWS

- Seek veterinary care immediately. Do not try to treat. There are no safe home remedies.
- Veterinarians will examine your pet and send any specimens off for testing.

HOW VETERINARIANS ARE PREPARING

- Staying alert for suspicious wounds
- Training clinic staff to recognize signs of NWS
- Educating clients. You are the first line of defense. Early detection is critical to protecting pets, wildlife, livestock and people

NO NEED TO PANIC

- The U.S. has successfully eradicated NWS before.
- The last U.S. outbreak, in 2016, was controlled quickly thanks to a veterinarian who identified a case in a stray dog.
- Releasing sterilized male flies stops NWS from reproducing. This method eliminated NWS from the U.S. in the 1960s. New facilities to release more sterile flies are under construction. Newer technologies also are being used.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Check your pets regularly for wounds, keep them clean, and call your veterinarian right away if you see anything unusual.