

State Veterinarian Mike Martin announced that the suspension of North Carolina poultry shows and public sales is lifted as of Wednesday, June 1. All exhibitions, farm tours, shows, sales, flea markets, auction markets, swaps and meets pertaining to poultry and feathered fowl in North Carolina can resume.

On Thursday, May 12, the last High Path Avian Influenza control area was terminated, since there have been no additional positive cases of HPAI in North Carolina since April 11.

"Poultry owners are still encouraged to follow strict biosecurity measures and monitor their flocks for signs of illness," said State Veterinarian Mike Martin. "This HPAI outbreak has affected 35 states and remaining on alert should be a priority. I would like to thank our poultry producers and those in the state that were impacted by the suspension for their cooperation as we worked to keep the poultry industry in North Carolina healthy. With warmer temperatures we hope the threat of HPAI is minimized for now.

"National trends show a decrease of new cases," Martin said. "HPAI is still a threat to our domestic poultry and so it is still encouraged to practice strict biosecurity including keeping flocks away from wild birds whenever possible." Poultry owners can report sick or dying birds to their local veterinarian, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Veterinary Division, 919-707-3250, or the N.C. Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory System 919-733-3986.

More information about High Path Avian Influenza is online at: www.ncagr.gov/avianflu.



NCDOT Has Developed an Early Flood-Warning System for Roads

When the next hurricane strikes, the N.C. Department of Transportation will be armed with an advanced flood-warning system that relies on a network of 400 river and stream gauges. The new system will allow the NCDOT for the first time to analyze, map and communicate in real-time any flood risks to roads, bridges and culverts. This critical information will go to NCDOT maintenance staff responding to flooded roads and washed-out culverts; and it will benefit local emergency management officials and the public accessing the department's *DriveNC.gov* website for timely weather-related closures.

"This state-of-the-art warning system our department has created will help us be better prepared for the next major storm," Transportation Secretary Eric Boyette said. "Even though we've had some quiet hurricane seasons recently, we cannot let our guard down."

The last major storm to impact the state's road network was Hurricane Florence in 2018. Researchers at N.C. State University and the National Hurricane Center are predicting an above-average hurricane season, which officially starts June 1.

Armada of flood gauges After Florence, the state Legislature gave the NCDOT a \$2 million grant to develop sophisticated software and install more flood gauges. The system, however, mostly taps into existing gauges operated by other agencies, such as the N.C. Emergency Management and the U.S. Geological Survey. The system includes an interactive online dashboard and flood mapping based on three-dimensional ground surveys.

One part of the new early flood-warning system covers almost 3,000 miles of state-maintained roads, mostly east of Interstate 95. The system also will allow NCDOT to monitor flood conditions for some 15,000 bridges and culverts statewide. The agency's Hydraulics Unit has been fine-tuning the system and training staff on it with smaller storms over the past year.

In addition, the NCDOT has formed a recent partnership with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Renaissance Computing Institute and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Coastal Resilience Center of Excellence to receive forecast modeling data on how storm surge may affect the state's road network in coastal areas.

Maintenance crews ready The NCDOT has been preparing for the hurricane season in other ways. The agency has been reviewing procedures and conducting exercises internally and with partner agencies.

Some highway divisions with coastal counties held employee training events this spring to review response and recovery operations. All of the agency's 14 highway divisions also have been taking inventory of supplies, doing maintenance on chainsaws and other equipment, and re-reading emergency on-call contracts that will supplement what NCDOT employees do in responding to a storm.

Public preparations State transportation officials remind people now is the time to prepare supplies for the possibility of an extended power outage, restricted traveling, or the need to be at a shelter. The N.C. Emergency Management maintains a comprehensive list of items to include in an emergency supply kit.

After the storm has passed, people should remember to never drive through flooded waters or around barricades. It only takes one foot of water to sweep a vehicle away.

For more preparation tips, including evacuation routes and evacuation zones by coastal county, visit ReadyNC.org and also watch this short video on how to prepare for severe weather (youtube.com/watch?v=TV2DmirDW68).

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia Webinar

A webinar entitled Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia webinar will be held on Thursday, June 23, from 1:00 to 2:00 pm via WebEx. Vicki Rhodes, RN, CDP, CCFP with Therapeutic Alternatives, Inc. will be the presenter.

Contact Suzanne Maness for more info or to register. Call (910) 627-1769 or email: connectionsfsf@gmail.com.

The registration deadline is June 21.

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