Bird and Bat Waste Exposure Prevention

OVERVIEW
Several diseases are caused by fungi and bacteria present in bird and bat droppings. The department utilizing and controlling an area is ultimately responsible for all required cleanup and bird/bat control measures (see Responsibility and Definitions).

Exposure
Humans may be infected by inhalation of fungi- or bacteria-contaminated dust or close contact with contaminated material. Therefore individuals who work in, or clean up, areas contaminated with bird or bat droppings may become exposed when the material is disturbed or dust is created.

Risk of Infection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Although cryptococcosis, histoplasmosis, and psittacosis infections are rare, they can occur. Individuals who are young, elderly, or immune-compromised are most at risk. These infectious agents pose no significant health risk to WSU employees provided simple precautions are followed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rabies can be prevalent in bats and exposure is a concern. Contact Environmental Health and Safety (EH&amp;S) before entering areas where bats are present.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responsibility

Department
The department assigned the space is responsible for cleanup and control before maintenance personnel enter the area.

Maintenance personnel entering an area where a large amount of droppings are present are not required to cleanup or perform infection control unless they utilize the area.

Pullman campus departments may use the blanket contract with the University's cleanup contractor. Refer to Whitman County Contract for more information.

Non-Pullman campus departments have the option of hiring a local area cleanup contractor in conformance with University purchased services contracting procedures. See BPPM 70.50 and contact EH&S or Purchasing Services for more information.
Bird and Bat Waste Exposure Prevention

EH&S

Contact EH&S to request:

- Area inspections if large quantities of droppings are present.
- Exposure prevention training for WSU employees.
- Further information.

Further information is available by telephoning EH&S at 509-335-3041 or going to the EH&S website at:

```html
ehs.wsu.edu/
```

**DEFINITIONS**

The diseases associated with fungi and bacteria present in bird and bat droppings include cryptococciosis, histoplasmosis, and psittacosis.

**Cryptococciosis**

Cryptococciosis is a disease caused by a fungus that naturally occurs in the soil and grows in bird and bat droppings.

Cryptococciosis symptoms include meningitis, severe headache, mental disturbances, fever, blurred vision, and cough. This disease is most common in individuals with compromised immune systems.

**Histoplasmosis**

Histoplasmosis is a disease caused by a fungus that naturally occurs in the soil and grows in bird and bat droppings.

Most individuals who acquire histoplasmosis have no symptoms. Symptoms that do occur will vary, depending on the form of the disease. Acute histoplasmosis is characterized by respiratory symptoms, general malaise, fever, chest pains, and a dry non-productive cough. The chronic form of histoplasmosis infection resembles chronic pulmonary tuberculosis and progresses over months or years.

**Psittacosis**

Psittacosis is a disease caused by a bacteria that is found in bird droppings and other secretions (often carried by pet birds).

Symptoms of psittacosis infection may include a low-grade fever that often becomes worse as the disease progresses, including anorexia, sore throat, light sensitivity, and a severe headache.

**PROCEDURES**

To prevent exposure to the organisms that cause cryptococciosis, histoplasmosis, and psittacosis, follow the procedures below.
Bird and Bat Waste Exposure Prevention

Precautions
When bird or bat droppings are present, do not sweep, vacuum, or disturb droppings. If possible avoid the area entirely.

Cleaning
Use wet cleaning methods only. Follow the steps below.

Small Amount of Droppings
If there is a small amount of bird or bat droppings in a localized area, use the following method for cleaning and disposal.

Use Protective Gloves
Wear latex or nonlatex gloves. Latex-sensitive individuals are to use nonlatex rubber gloves.

Disinfect Before Disposal
Mix a disinfectant solution of one part bleach to ten parts water. Contact EH&S for information on other acceptable disinfectants.

Thoroughly soak or spray the bird or bat droppings with the disinfectant using a spray bottle or a clean pesticide application sprayer.

After the droppings are wetted, wipe up the droppings using a mop, sponge, or rag that has also been soaked in the disinfectant.

Disposal
Place contaminated waste material and gloves into a plastic bag and seal.

Dispose of the bag in the regular trash.

After Cleaning
Wash mop, sponge, or rag in the disinfectant solution and rinse.

Wash hands with soap and hot water, even after wearing gloves.

Large Quantity of Droppings
If there is a large quantity of droppings in a large area, use the following method for cleaning and disposal.

Contact EH&S
Contact EH&S to inspect the area and recommend proper cleanup and bird/bat control procedures; telephone 509-335-3041.

Use Respirator and Protective Clothing
Wear the following gear while cleaning:

- NIOSH-approved respirator with HEPA filter cartridges
- Latex or nonlatex rubber gloves (latex-sensitive individuals are to use nonlatex rubber gloves)
- Eye protection
- Disposable coveralls
- Shoe coverings or launderable clothing with rubber boots
Bird and Bat Waste Exposure Prevention

Large Quantity of Droppings (cont.)

Respirator and Protective Clothing (cont.)
Fit-testing and training is required before using respirator (see SPPM 3.24. Contact EH&S to schedule fit-testing and training.

Disinfect Before Disposal
Mix a disinfectant solution of one part bleach to ten parts water. Contact EH&S for information on other acceptable disinfectants.

Thoroughly soak or spray the bird or bat droppings with the disinfectant using a spray bottle or a clean pesticide application sprayer.

After the droppings are wetted, wipe up the droppings using a mop, sponge, or rag that has also been soaked in the disinfectant.

Disposal
Place contaminated waste material and gloves into a plastic bag and seal.

Dispose of the bag in the regular trash.

After Cleaning
Wash mop, sponge, or rag in the disinfectant solution and rinse.

Disinfect rubber boots and shoe coverings. Remove gloves and wash hands and/or shower with soap and hot water.

Launder clothes worn while cleaning in a separate load.

Bird and Bat Control Measures
After cleanup, prevent birds and bats from reentering the area.

Screen or plug entryways into areas.

If birds or bats are roosting in open areas, use "spike" wire, "spiders," or other acceptable devices to prevent them from landing in the work area. See EH&S for more information about open area control devices.

NOTE: Avoid any measures that might unnecessarily harm or kill birds or bats.

See SPPM 6.30 for more information or contact EH&S.

WHITMAN COUNTY CONTRACTS
A WSU Pullman department experiencing a bird or bat dropping problem may purchase services from the University's pest control and/or cleanup contractor. Contact EH&S or Purchasing for the names and telephone numbers of the contractors.
Bird and Bat Waste Exposure Prevention

Paying for Services

The department is responsible for paying for all contractor pest control, inspection and cleanup charges related to work conducted in the departmental space.

A departmental official with expenditure authority signs the vendor’s invoice and enters the account code of the supporting WSU budget/project (see BPPM 70.02).

The department routes the invoice to Accounts Payable for payment.