

Precautions for taxidermists when handling deer that may have been exposed to CWD

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a contagious neurological disease that causes deer to die. CWD has not been detected in Florida. CWD can spread when deer consume prions present in soil contaminated with the feces, urine, saliva, other bodily fluids, or decomposed tissues of a CWD-infected animal. To protect your business, know and adhere to the following precautions:

Guidance for taxidermists

- Possessing a whole carcass or head from any place outside of Florida is prohibited except for Georgia and Alabama, where special permitting/reporting requirements apply.
- Only accept: boned-out meat or products thereof; clean hides with no tissue or head attached; antlers, antlers with a clean skull plate with no tissue attached, or clean skulls with no tissue attached; finished taxidermy products; or clean teeth with no tissue attached from any place outside of Florida except for Georgia and Alabama, where special permitting/reporting requirements apply.
- When handling any deer carcass, take the following steps:
 - Report any suspected importation violations by contacting the Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-3922.
 - Minimize the handling of the brain, spinal tissues, and lymphoid tissues (e.g. tonsils, spleen, lymph nodes).
 - Wear latex or rubber gloves.
 - Decontaminate your equipment with a 50% bleach solution.
- Ensure all customer contact information is captured.
- Double bag leftover deer parts and dispose of them 1) in a waste receptacle for collection by a waste disposal provider, 2) at a Class I landfill, or 3) by commercial incineration.
- Educate your customers with the following advice:
 - Do not shoot, handle or consume any animal that is acting abnormally or appears to be sick. If you see or harvest an animal that appears sick, call the FWC's CWD hotline at 866-CWD-WATCH (293-9282).
 - Avoid consuming meat from any animal that tests positive for CWD.

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Florida Administrative Code 68A-12.004

Concerning Taxidermy Operations

(11) Taxidermy operations and mounting requirements:

(a) Any person engaged in taxidermy shall tag all carcasses (whole specimens), untanned hides, and uncured animal parts of fish and wildlife, possessed or received with the name of the **person taking or acquiring such fish or wildlife, the person's address, and date taken or acquired. In addition, any deer subject to the provisions of paragraph 68A-12.003(2)(c), F.A.C., shall have the Commission's harvest reporting system confirmation number recorded on the tag.** As an alternative to tagging, persons engaged in taxidermy may choose to use a log book and numbering system. The log book shall contain the same information required of the aforementioned tag. The carcass, untanned hide, or uncured animal part shall be assigned a number, which shall be affixed to the specimen so as to be readily identifiable and traceable to the log book information. The log book shall be kept on premises for inspection by Commission personnel.

(b) After fish or wildlife carcasses, hides, and parts have been cured or mounted, tagging or maintaining a log account is required only for the following:

1. All nongame migratory birds as listed in the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and as adopted by rule 68A-16.001, F.A.C.
2. All species listed by the Commission as Endangered or Threatened, and any Species of Special Concern for which there is no bag limit or open season established by the Commission or other state agency.
3. All furbearing animals or non-game mammals for which there is no established open season.
4. All alligators not tagged with CITES tags.
5. All fawn deer.

(c) Persons engaged in taxidermy shall not possess nor mount fish and wildlife carcasses listed in subparagraphs 68A-12.004(11)(b)1.-5., F.A.C., nor their parts (except for road-killed fox) without a permit from the Commission, except as provided herein. The procedure for obtaining permits for mounting shall be as follows:

1. Persons wishing to possess or mount such specimens or have such services performed, shall make application by letter to the Commission for such permit.
2. A dated copy of the letter of application shall be kept with the specimen, or the specimen shall be numbered and traceable to the letter of application kept in a log book.
3. The letter of application shall include a description of the specimen, an explanation of how the specimen was acquired, and the date of application.
4. The specimen shall not be maintained for over 90 days without a permit from the Commission.
5. Specimens for which permits are not issued for mounting shall be buried, incinerated, or otherwise disposed of as directed by Commission law enforcement personnel.

(d) The criteria for evaluation and issuance of permits for the mounting of protected species as listed in subparagraphs 68A-12.004(11)(b)1.-5., F.A.C., shall be as follows:

1. For nongame migratory birds – Permits are issued only for educational display purposes to schools, nonprofit educational institutions, museums, or facilities operated by a municipal, county, state, or other public entity.
2. For listed species referenced in rules 68A-27.003 and 68A-27.005, F.A.C. – Permits are issued only in accordance with the requirements of rules 68A-27.003, 68A-27.005 and 68A-27.007, F.A.C.
3. For furbearing wildlife or nongame mammals – Permits are issued only when the specimen was legally acquired. No permit shall be required for road-killed fox.
4. For alligators – Permits for the mounting of untagged alligators are issued only for educational display purposes to schools or nonprofit educational institutions, museums, or facilities operated by a municipal, county, state, or other public entity.
5. For fawn deer – Permits for the mounting of fawn deer for possession by private individuals or businesses are issued only where the fawn was legally acquired or for educational display in schools, nonprofit educational institutions, museums, or facilities operated by a municipal, county, state, or other public entity.

(e) No permit shall be required for the mounting of carcasses, green hides, or uncured parts of:

1. Frozen or preserved specimens of game birds, game mammals, or furbearing animals that were legally taken during the open season.
2. Specimens of game mammals except black bear, game birds, fox squirrel, otter, bobcat or mink that were killed on roads or highways.

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