



Humane Animal Welfare Society  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**HAWS CONTROLLING DISTEMPER INCIDENCE**

*Waukesha animal resource center going “well-beyond” necessary protocols to contain, treat*

**WAUKESHA — May 9, 2018 — HAWS**, the Humane Animal Welfare Society of Waukesha County, has segregated the shelter’s dog population at this time, in order to contain an incidence of the distemper virus brought in by recent arrivals to the facility.

HAWS received word of “possible exposure on the transport truck” of dogs from a Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) facility in Tulsa, OK, which were transported to Wisconsin in late April. A dog that was never at HAWS, but was transported to another shelter in the region along with dogs arriving at HAWS, has tested positive for the distemper virus. The dog is doing well and responding to treatment.

HAWS has enacted a full segregation of the transport dogs and precautionary testing. The initial results arrived at HAWS the evening of May 7<sup>th</sup>; 4 dogs tested positive and are now undergoing treatment. Active management at HAWS, along with segregation, includes keeping all puppies in foster care, doing off-site adoptions of puppies, and ensuring all adult dogs remaining in the shelter have an updated distemper vaccination.

“Dogs under 5 months of age, because of their immature immune systems, are most susceptible to the distemper virus,” stated HAWS staff veterinarian, Dr. Kolleen Meyer. “We have consulted with the University of Wisconsin Shelter Medicine specialists, and they have assured us the risk is extremely minimal to adult dogs, those dogs within the general public and shelter dogs that have been vaccinated.” While there is no cure for distemper, the virus can be treated successfully and the majority of dogs recover with no lasting effects.

“We will continue to test and treat dogs as necessary. We have been assured by shelter medicine specialists that those adult dogs that are non-symptomatic are able to be adopted safely,” noted HAWS Executive Director Lynn Olenik. “Distemper is a virus that can be found in public places – including dog parks – and in open water sources. Raccoons are often carriers. Keeping pets up-to-date on the distemper vaccine is the best means of protection. As always, HAWS recommends consulting with your veterinarian should you have any concerns about your pet’s health and well-being.”

*HAWS, a non-profit organization established in 1965, assists 8,000 animals each year and welcomes more than 35,000 human visitors to our shelter annually. As an open admission and full service shelter, HAWS assures sanctuary for animals in need while offering many diverse educational programs and services to promote responsible pet ownership and prevent animal abuse.*

*The shelter is located at 701 Northview Road in Waukesha, Wisconsin.*

*For more information call (262) 542-8851 or log onto our website at [hawspets.org](http://hawspets.org).*

*Follow us on Twitter at “HAWS Waukesha” or Like “Humane Animal Welfare Society – HAWS of Waukesha” on Facebook.*

*HAWS: Building a No-Kill Community.*

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