

Animal Health Advisory: Outbreaks of Leptospirosis and Canine Influenza H3N2

Appear to Have Ended

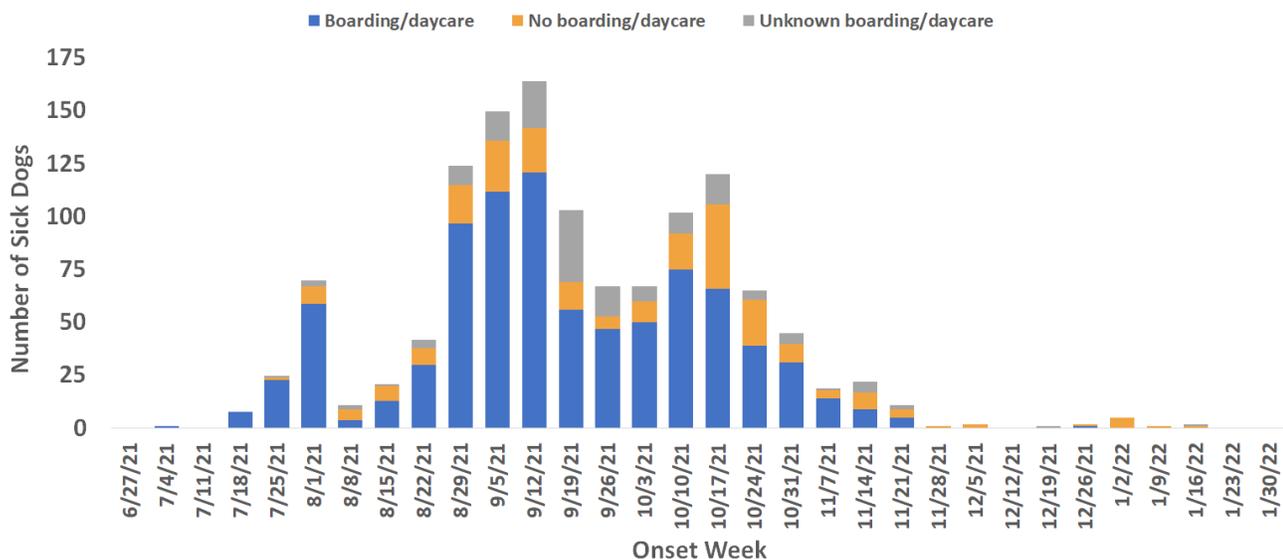
3.11.2022

Dear Veterinary Colleagues:

From July 2021-January 2022, Veterinary Public Health (VPH) investigated two disease outbreaks in Los Angeles County (LAC) dogs: canine influenza H3N2 (CIV H3N2) and leptospirosis. **Both outbreaks are considered to be concluded.** Below is a summary of data for each outbreak. Please note, these numbers may change slightly as we continue to follow up on cases.

- **Canine influenza H3N2 outbreak:** This was the largest outbreak of CIV H3N2 reported in Los Angeles County, with 1,344 total reported cases. Of the cases reported with known exposure, 85% (972/1146) were associated with attending boarding kennels, dog daycare settings, or shelters. This virus spread rapidly among dogs throughout LAC, affecting at least 68 congregate facilities and 2 animal shelters. Each facility was contacted, either in person or by phone/email, and given recommendations on how to control the spread. 15% (174/1146) of the reported cases never visited a boarding or daycare facility but were exposed in settings including walks in their neighborhoods, dog parks, groomers, and veterinary clinics. Sadly, 21 deaths were associated with this outbreak. The epidemic curve for this outbreak with information about boarding status is below.

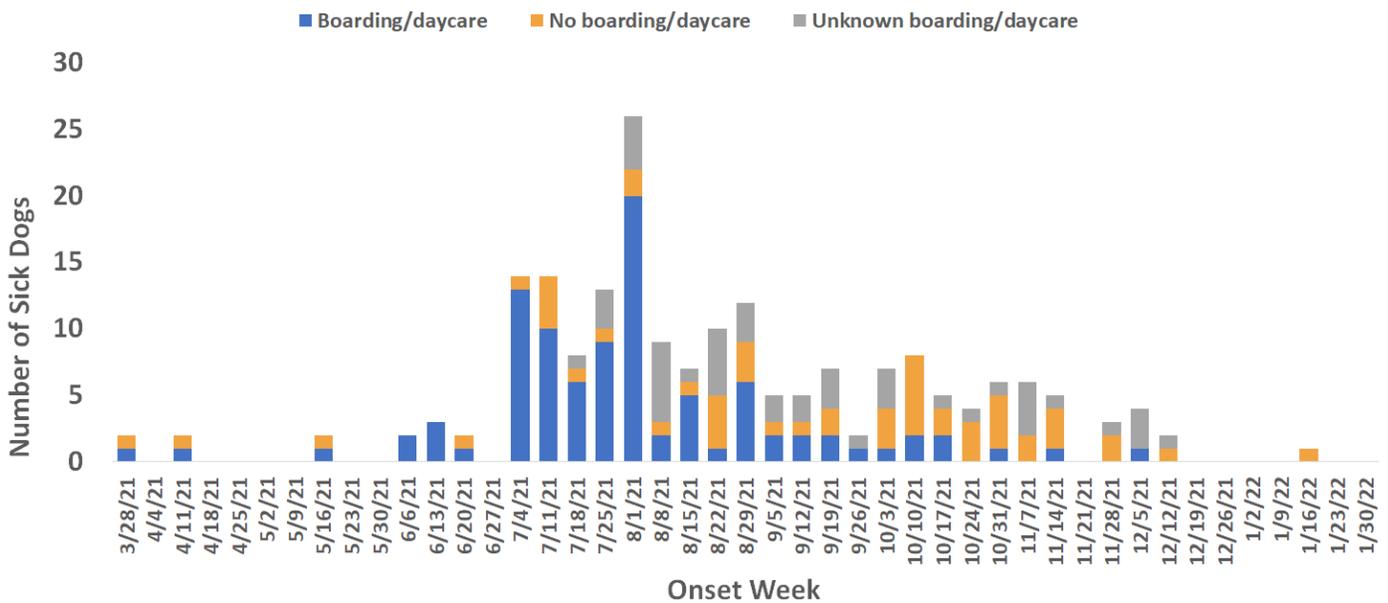
Reported Canine Influenza H3N2 Cases in Dogs with Boarding Status (n=1251)
By week, LA County, June 27, 2021–February 6, 2022



*This chart includes confirmed, probable, and suspect cases reported to Veterinary Public Health with onset date available. If onset date was not available, lab confirmed date was used. There are 93 additional cases without a reported onset date or lab confirmed date. These cases are pending investigation and not included in this chart.

- Leptospirosis outbreak:** Based on laboratory and epidemiological evidence, the *Leptospira* serovar Canicola was the likely cause of this outbreak. There were 201 cases resulting in 13 deaths. Of the cases with data available, 55% (91/164) of dogs were hospitalized. Most affected dogs either live in or had exposures on the west side of the county or the San Fernando valley. 66% (101/154) of dogs had exposures at dog daycare or boarding facilities. There were two large clusters of cases (over 30 dogs each) at two separate daycare/boarding facilities. Additionally, 49% (51/105) of cases reported going to dog parks. Owners also reported hiking, going to beaches, and walks around the neighborhood as potential routes of exposure. The epidemic curve for this outbreak with information about boarding status is below.

**Reported Leptospirosis Cases in Dogs with Boarding Status (n=196)
By week, LA County, March 28, 2021–February 6, 2022**



*This chart includes confirmed, probable, and suspect cases reported to Veterinary Public Health with onset date available. If onset date was not available, lab confirmed date was used. There are 5 additional cases without a reported onset date or lab confirmed date. These cases are pending investigation and not included in this chart. Six asymptomatic cases are included, the lab confirmed date is used for those.

Should veterinarians still recommend the Canine Influenza vaccine?

Yes. It remains important that dogs are fully vaccinated against CIV H3N2 before they enter boarding kennels, dog day care, dog parks, or engage in dog group activities. This vaccination is also advisable for dogs that may occasionally encounter other dogs.

The importation of dogs and puppies from canine influenza endemic areas remains constant throughout the year. Given how quickly the virus spreads and how long dogs are contagious to others, the risk for dogs in LA County to contract the disease will always be present. Dogs are considered fully vaccinated when at least 14 days have passed since the last booster was administered. The CIV H3N2 vaccine decreases both the severity of clinical disease and viral shedding but does not prevent against infection. Therefore, herd immunity in the dog community is important for outbreak control.

Should veterinarians still recommend the Leptospirosis vaccine?

Yes. Following this outbreak, the *Leptospira* vaccine should be considered a core vaccine for dogs in LA County. Dogs were the primary reservoir for the serovar suspected in causing this outbreak, but wildlife and rodent exposures pose a continuous risk of infection as well. Vaccination with the 4-serovar vaccine is recommended, even after a dog has had natural infection, as cross-protection against the various serovars after natural infection is not well documented. The vaccine should be boosted annually thereafter. Dogs should be fully vaccinated prior to attending places where other dogs gather (daycare, boarding, dog parks, training, groomers).

Please remember that even when there is not an ongoing outbreak, infectious diseases in animals in LA County are [legally reportable](#) to the Department of Public Health. Although these outbreaks are over, we may still see sporadic cases of either of these two diseases. Reporting forms are available on our website: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/Forms.htm>. Timely and complete reporting of cases (including suspect cases) by veterinarians and boarding facilities in both outbreaks was essential to prevention and control efforts. It also allowed VPH to provide pertinent information and recommendations to veterinarians, veterinary staff, pet owners and pet congregate facilities.

For more information about the canine influenza outbreak:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/InfluenzaCanineH3N2.htm>

For more information about the canine leptospirosis outbreak:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/Leptospirosis2021.htm>

Sincerely,

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