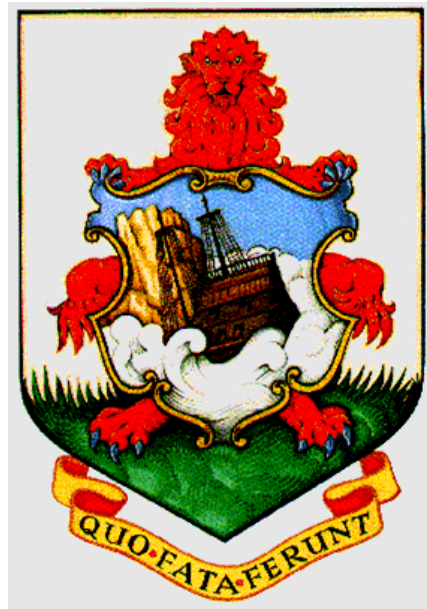


MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY PROTECTED FROM LEPTOSPIROSIS



Prepared for

The Honourable Kim N. Wilson, JP, MP
Minister of Health

November 7, 2025

Good morning,

Mr. Speaker,

This morning, I would like to advise the public about a public health alert regarding the current leptospirosis situation in Bermuda, and I will outline the response led by the Ministry of Health and partner agencies and share clear and practical steps that everyone can take to protect their health.

Mr Speaker,

For those that do not know, Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection that can be transmitted directly or indirectly to humans from rodents or pets, such as dogs, as well as farm animals.

The spread of the bacteria occurs through contact with water, soil, or food that has been contaminated by the urine of an infected animal. In environments where there is heavy rainfall, floods, or poor sanitation, the risk of spread of the *leptospira* bacteria increases.

Mr. Speaker,

While most cases are mild, early symptoms of leptospirosis often mimic mild flu-like symptoms, as well as yellowing of the skin, skin rashes, or redness of the eyes. It is important to note that if left untreated, severe

infections can lead to liver or kidney failure, and other serious complications with the brain, lungs or heart. This is why early detection and treatment are important.

To provide the local context, for the year 2025, the Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (ESU) has reported three (3) confirmed cases of leptospirosis in humans, all of which have received appropriate medical care.

There has been no identified link between the three (3) cases and their exposures.

Over the past 10 years, ESU has reported only one (1) confirmed human case in 2023. However, there have been sporadic cases of leptospirosis reported in dogs in past years.

Mr. Speaker,

The ESU, under the direction of the Chief Medical Officer, is currently leading case investigations and coordinating a robust and multi-sectoral response to our current Leptospirosis situation.

And, recognizing the linkages between human, animal, and environmental health, the ESU has employed a One Health Approach,

working in close collaboration with the Environmental Health, Vector Control, and Laboratory teams to conduct environmental health assessments, intensify rodent control measures, and diagnostic testing. Specifically:

- The Environmental Health team maintains a continuous baiting schedule in identified hot spots across the islands, with particular focus on gardens, city parks, and drains.
- The Vector Control team has intensified trapping and control measures in hot spot areas;
- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has been an invaluable partner in field assessments and mitigation efforts;
- Regional technical guidance has been sought from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to ensure best practices in surveillance, testing, and control are applied; and
- Laboratories have been scaling up testing and sharing results promptly to inform response actions.

Mr. Speaker,

These coordinated actions reflect a comprehensive, evidence-based effort to protect public health. I am pleased to report that the ESU and partner agencies remain vigilant and will continue to update the community as the situation evolves.

It is vital that I remind the public of measures they should be taking to protect themselves, their pets, and their environment:

- Wear protective gear when gardening, working outdoors or with animals;
- Wash your hands and clean cuts thoroughly after contact with soil or animals;
- Avoid swimming or walking in waters that may have been contaminated with animal urine, especially after heavy rains or floods;
- Protect food and drinks from rodents by covering them;
- Remove all standing water and debris from your outdoor spaces that can serve as breeding grounds for rodents;
- Keep your trash tied up tightly and use garbage cans that have lids;
- Only take out your garbage on collection days;
- Protect your pets by getting them vaccinated; and
- Promptly seek medical attention if symptoms develop after possible exposure to contaminated water or soil, or with an infected animal.

Mr. Speaker,

Leptospirosis is preventable, and public education and awareness are important to prevent future cases of leptospirosis in our community. In this regard, the Ministry of Health will continue to:

- expand community education and outreach efforts among residents, especially schools, about safe waste collection, management and disposal practices;
- share communications with health care providers and veterinary care providers to bolster their vigilance; and
- issue public advisories to raise awareness on preventive practices in our community.

Bermuda, please remember that residents have a role to play in managing their own spaces, protecting their pets, and practicing good hygiene and sanitation.

Mr. Speaker,

The Ministry of Health will also continue epidemiological surveillance and case follow-up and will coordinate with partner agencies to monitor the situation.

I assure the public that we have taken all actions within our mandate to control this situation and to maintain a low level of risk through increased precautionary measures. We will remain proactive, and we ask for the public's cooperation in practicing effective rodent control measures to help mitigate further spread of these bacteria.

In closing, I thank the health and environmental staff who have been working tirelessly to mount a comprehensive response to contain and control this situation. I encourage the listening audience to follow the Ministry's Facebook page and the Government website's Health Information page for the latest information and guidance.

For members of the public who need assistance with rodent control on their property, please contact Environmental Health at 278-5333 or envhealth@gov.bm. We are here to support communities with prevention, treatment, and environmental health resources.

Thank you.