

Water stays on dead Colo. ducks' backs

January 7 2008

Dead ducks that have lost the waterproofing on their feathers have been turning up at Colorado wastewater treatment plants.

About 35 ducks have been found this year at plants in the Denver area, The Rocky Mountain News reported Sunday. About 1,000 turned up last year.

The cause of the die-off that began a year ago is still unknown, though scientists have ruled out common diseases like avian influenza and botulism, the newspaper said.

A spokesman for the Colorado Division of Wildlife said the problem is probably not caused by chemicals from the wastewater plants, because they have not added any new substances in the last two years.

Officials are hoping a study by federal and state scientists slated to begin next week will help determine the cause of the deaths.

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