

NOAA declares seal die-off as 'unusual mortality event'

August 31 2018

The federal government is declaring the deaths of hundreds of seals off the New England coast this summer to be an "unusual mortality event."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has said tests indicate dead seals found in New England tested positive for [avian flu](#) and phocine distemper.

More than 240 seals have been found dead off the Maine coast in July and August, while more than 80 have been reported off New Hampshire and Massachusetts in those months.

NOAA said Friday it will investigate the "elevated strandings of harbor and grey seals in the Northeast attributed to disease."

The agency says that declaring a marine mammal die-off as an "unusual mortality event" means the deaths will be prioritized for investigation and response.

© 2018 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: NOAA declares seal die-off as 'unusual mortality event' (2018, August 31) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-08-noaa-declares-die-off-unusual-mortality.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--