

Bald eagles believed to have been poisoned near Minnesota landfill

December 12 2022, by Richard Chin



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More than a dozen dead or dying bald eagles were found near a landfill in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, suspected victims of poisoning by eating carcasses of animals that were chemically euthanized and dumped

at the landfill, according to wildlife officials.

The University of Minnesota Raptor Center said that on Dec. 4, the Inver Grove Heights police department brought in a severely sick juvenile bald eagle that had been found in the snow near the Pine Bend Landfill. Veterinarians suspected it had eaten from a carcass of an animal that was chemically euthanized with pentobarbital.

On the next day, volunteers went to the same area and found nine additional birds with similar signs of poisoning.

Raptor Center executive director Victoria Hall said some of the birds were lying motionless, face down in the [snow](#), and Raptor Center workers were initially uncertain if the birds were still alive. On Dec. 6, U.S. Fish and Wildlife workers brought one more sick eagle to the Raptor Center.

Hall said the Minnesota DNR found the bodies of two other eagles in the area. The Raptor Center said it was later confirmed that carcasses of animals that had been euthanized with chemicals were brought to the landfill on Dec. 2 and could have been scavenged by eagles.

Hall was unable to say what kind of carcasses were brought to the [landfill](#). But she said animals that have been chemically euthanized are supposed to be disposed of in a manner so that other animals can't scavenge on them.

Of the 11 eagles brought into the raptor center, three also had severe lead poisoning and one bird, also infected with [avian influenza](#), has died. The remaining 10 birds are under [intensive care](#). Hall said she's optimistic they can recover to be released.

She said the case is under investigation by U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the

Minnesota DNR and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. A fund has been set up to help pay for the eagles' care at z.umn.edu/TRCeagles.

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