



September 16, 2025

**BY EMAIL**

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) Board of Health  
1005 Ouellette Ave., Windsor, N9A 4J8  
Attention: Dr. Ken Blanchette, Chief Executive Officer  
Email: [kblanchette@wechu.org](mailto:kblanchette@wechu.org); [eedurance@wechu.org](mailto:eedurance@wechu.org)

**Re: Avian Influenza (H5N1) Prevention and Risk Mitigation**

At its Regular Council Meeting held on July 7, 2025, Council supported the enclosed correspondence dated June 12, 2025 from Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) Board of Health regarding Avian Influenza (H5N1) Prevention and Risk Mitigation.

Council accordingly passed the following resolution:

**R25-07-322**

Moved By Deputy Mayor Shepley  
Seconded By Councillor Verbeek

**That** the correspondence from Windsor-Essex Health Unit Board of Health dated June 12, 2025 regarding Avian Influenza (H5N1) Prevention and Risk Mitigation be received and supported;

**That** a letter from the Town of Essex be sent to Anthony Leardi, MPP Essex, Andrew Dowie, MPP Windsor-Tecumseh, Lisa Gretzky, MPP Windsor West, Honourable Trevor Jones, MPP Chatham Kent Leamington; and

**That** Council adopt the following resolution:

**Whereas**, the current pandemic risk of H5N1 in Ontario for the general public remains low, but the risk of infection is higher for individuals with close contact to infected animals, like farm workers, and for those handling wild birds;



**Whereas**, wastewater monitoring is a non-invasive, cost-effective rapidly evolving tool for public health surveillance to help alert public health officials to diseases that may be spreading in a community;

**Whereas**, H5N1 vaccines are available, but not currently accessible for public use in Ontario; and

**Whereas**, backyard poultry, like chickens, are highly vulnerable to the H5N1 virus, especially if they have free range outdoor access and exposure to infected wild birds.

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved That** the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health will continue to prioritize and resource the work associated with the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit's emergency preparedness activities and response planning associated with H5N1;

**That** the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health recommends that local municipalities with by-laws permitting backyard chickens make immediate efforts to ensure that backyard chicken owners are aware of the increased illness risks of H5N1, and strategies that should be implemented to reduce their risk of illness;

**That** the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health recommends that local municipalities and key stakeholders connected with the H5N1 response, make efforts in the next three months to update protocols, conduct simulations and activity drills, and plan to ensure the availability of necessary resources in the event of future changes to local H5N1 risk;

**That** the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health recommends that the provincial government work to secure the necessary supply of H5N1 vaccines for individuals at increased risk in Windsor and Essex County and across the province in necessary quantities; and further



**That** the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health encourages the provincial government to fund the research and development of wastewater testing strategies and strengthen the infrastructure for clinical testing that could be implemented at the local and regional levels.

**Carried**

I trust you will find this satisfactory. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "jmall", written in a cursive style.

Joseph Malandrucolo  
Director, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk  
[jmalandrucolo@essex.ca](mailto:jmalandrucolo@essex.ca)

Enclosure

cc. Anthony Leardi, MPP Essex  
Andrew Dowie, MPP Windsor-Tecumseh  
Lisa Gretzky, MPP Windsor West,  
Honourable Trevor Jones, MPP Chatham Kent Leamington