

Dog owners urged to take precautions against virus

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Owners of puppies and adult dogs should take precautions before taking their animals to dog parks and other public places, the Greenhill Humane Society said Tuesday amid an apparent increase in parvovirus.

Lane County Animal Services has seen three cases of the virus over the past month, Supervisor Tom Howard said; the Emergency Veterinary Hospital in Springfield has reported five cases.

Greenhill hasn't seen an outbreak, operations manager Rhonda Livesay said, but is cautioning people against taking puppies to areas heavily traveled by dogs if they haven't had the series of vaccinations to protect them from parvovirus.

The parovirus is more common in puppies than adult dogs.

It is a viral disease that attacks the lining of the digestive system, causing dogs to not absorb nutrients or liquids. Symptoms include fever, lethargy, depression and loss of appetite. Severe, bloody diarrhea and vomiting are also signs of the disease.

Parovirus outbreaks are relatively rare, Howard said. A major outbreak in central Lane County was last reported in 1999.
