

Owl Pellet Dissection Safety Protocol

A safety protocol has been outlined for owl pellet dissection. The procedures are in response to a couple of situations in other states where it is believed that the owl pellets may have been contaminated with salmonella bacteria. This protocol is very similar to the one used with the chicken wing dissection.

- Students are to wear new gloves whenever they handle the owl pellet or any materials from the owl pellet.
- After each use, the students must throw out the used gloves. The gloves cannot be reused.
- In place of the boxes, the pellets, bones, tools, and trays will be placed in large bags. The bags should only be handled with gloves. The bags will be placed in a lidded box for safekeeping.
- Even though the students wear gloves, they should wash their hands after handling the pellet or materials from the pellet.
- While working with the owl pellet, the material must be on a tray. Newspaper should be used to cover the desks. The newspaper should be thrown away after each use.
- Students will need to take off their gloves to complete lab sheets that require direct observation of the bones. Students will need to be educated of the fact that they may not touch the bones, bags, tools, or tray without gloves. Furthermore, they should not touch their pencils/pens or papers when wearing the gloves.
- Following each observation of the owl pellets, student desks will need to be thoroughly wiped cleaned with sanitizing wipes that have been added to the kit.
- Students may not eat their snack anytime they are working with owl pellets.

Note: The State of Illinois does not require this level of precaution when handling owl pellets. District 27 is taking extra precautions. Infection is extremely rare and has only been documented in situations where no general safety standards were in place such as washing hands after directly touching the owl pellet. Furthermore, we use a reputable source for owl pellets that sanitizes them.