



Health Division Reports Confirmed Rabies in Oakland County Kitten

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For Immediate Release



HEALTH DIVISION

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NEWS RELEASE

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Health Division Reports Confirmed Rabies in Oakland County Kitten

Sept. 8, 2017, Pontiac, Mich. – Oakland County Health Division reports a confirmed case of rabies in a stray kitten found in the Rochester Hills / Troy area. The Health Division strongly urges residents to reduce rabies exposure by staying away from wild animals such as skunks, bats, raccoons, foxes, and stray cats and dogs. The rabies virus is found in the saliva of infected animals, and is spread through bites or scratches.

"Our natural instinct is to befriend an animal, pet one that seems friendly, or help an injured animal. But stray and wild animals should be avoided," said Kathy Forzley, director of the Oakland County Department of Health and Human Services.

If a wild animal is found in your home or is near your home behaving strangely, call the Oakland County Animal Shelter and Pet Adoption Center at (248) 391-4102 for assistance. If bitten by any wild animal or animal unknown to you, wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately. To report an animal bite, call the Health Division at (248) 858-1286.

“Rabies is most often found in bats. The last animals, other than a bat, to have a confirmed case of rabies in Oakland County were skunks in 2012,” said Forzley. “This case is a reminder that rabies is present in our communities. People and their pets should be careful to avoid encounters with animals that they do not know.”

There are simple steps everyone can take to protect themselves from rabies:

- Have your pets vaccinated regularly. This will protect the pet if exposed to animals with rabies, and prevent them from becoming a carrier and infecting humans.
- Do not handle stray, wild, or dead animals. Animals most affected by rabies are raccoons, bats, skunks, and foxes.
- Call local animal control experts for help if an animal is acting strangely, including:

Having problems swallowing

Exhibiting lots of drool or saliva

Appearing more tame than you would expect

Biting at everything

Having trouble moving or is paralyzed

- Keep pets indoors or supervised, to limit their exposure to wild animals that might be rabid. Use a leash when walking dogs or keep them in a fenced-in yard.
- Do not feed or put water for pets outside and keep garbage securely covered, as these items may attract wild or stray animals.

More information about rabies can be found on the Oakland County Health Division’s website at oakgov.com/health or through the Nurse on Call service at 800-848-5533 or noc@oakgov.com.

For MEDIA INQUIRIES ONLY: Contact Kathy Forzley, director of the Oakland County Health and Human Service Department, at 248-858-1293.



NURSE ON CALL PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION HOTLINE

800.848.5533 NOC@OAKGOV.COM

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