

Rabies Prevention

In response to some recent confirmed cases of rabies **in animals** within our State the Colts Neck Health Department would like to remind residents on ways to prevent rabies transmission to humans:

- People should stay away from wildlife, particularly wildlife that is acting sick, aggressive, unusually friendly to people or paralyzed. Abnormally acting wildlife or other animal should be immediately reported to the animal control provider for the municipality
- All cats and dogs should be kept currently vaccinated against rabies. Pet owners should monitor the expiration dates of their pets rabies vaccinations and revaccinate their animals prior to expiration.
- Vaccines are also available to protect sheep, cattle and horses against rabies and owner of these livestock animals should strongly consider vaccinating their animals if they are accessible to the public, e.g., petting zoos, riding stables and animals attending agricultural fairs.
- If a person is bitten by any animal they should receive medical attention and be evaluated for a rabies exposure. If possible, the biting animal should be captured or contained, or ownership information gathered so the animal can be evaluated.
- Persons who find bats in their homes should contact their local health departments for guidance. If someone was bitten or had direct contact with a bat it should be captured and contained if possible. Bat-proofing to prevent bats from entering the living space of residences should be undertaken to prevent future exposures.

To date, there have been 225 laboratory confirmed New Jersey animal rabies cases in 2013. The species breakdown is as follows: 113 raccoons, 31 skunks, 13 cats, 11 foxes, 6 groundhogs, 1 otter, 1 donkey and 49 bats. In 2012, there were 309 laboratory confirmed New Jersey animal rabies cases, including 68 bats.

Rabies guidance is available on the DOH website:
<http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/rabies/index.shtml> .