

The rabies vaccine bait drop is an initiative of the United States Department of Agriculture to help prevent rabies, and to keep it from spreading north across the Canadian border. Rabies is a deadly viral disease of the brain that infects mammals.

Rabies vaccine is wrapped in sweet-scented bait attractive to raccoons and skunks. In May 2024, about 264,000 of these quarter-sized blister packs will be dropped from low-flying aircraft in Vermont or placed out of sight by hand in densely populated areas.

Learn more about rabies in Vermont at [HealthVermont.gov/Rabies](https://HealthVermont.gov/Rabies).

## Rabies vaccine bait will be dropped from low-flying aircraft or hand-placed in:

### Chittenden County

Burlington, Colchester, Essex, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, South Burlington, Underhill, Westford, Williston, Winooski

### Grand Isle County

Alburg, Grand Isle, Isle La Motte, North Hero, South Hero

### Franklin County

Bakersfield, Berkshire, Enosburg, Highgate, Fairfax, Fairfield, Fletcher, Franklin, Georgia, Richford, Sheldon, St. Albans, Swanton

### Lamoille County

Belvidere, Cambridge, Waterville

## Questions?

Call the Vermont Rabies Hotline at 1-800-4-RABIES (1-800-472-2437)



## **When will the bait drop begin and how long will it last?**

This bait drop will begin in May. Timing and duration depend on weather conditions and other factors. The air drop will take several days, and hand placement can take up to two weeks.

## **Will this project get rid of rabies?**

This project is designed to help reduce the likelihood of wildlife getting the disease. It is important for people to take precautions against rabies: vaccinate pets, keep your distance from wild animals, and call your doctor right away if you are bitten or if you get animal saliva in an open wound, eyes, nose or mouth.

## **Who is conducting this project?**

The project is an interstate/international cooperative effort. The research is directed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services in partnership with the Vermont Departments of Health and Fish & Wildlife, and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets.

## **What is the bait made of and what does it look like?**

The bait is a blister pack covered with a sweet-smelling dark green waxy coating; the dark green coating has a label printed in black.

## **Is the bait harmful to children or pets?**

The bait is not harmful to children, pets or other wildlife. Millions of baits have been dropped in the U.S. and Canada with no ill effects reported in people or pets. You cannot get rabies from the vaccine or bait.

## **What should I do if I find a bait?**

If you find a bait, do not disturb it and keep children away. If your pet eats it, or your pet or child brings one home, call the Vermont Rabies Hotline 1-800-472-2437 to report it. If your dog picks up a bait, do not risk getting bitten by trying to remove it.

## **Will the bait attract raccoons or other animals to my property?**

No, the bait will not attract raccoons or other animals to your property. However, it would be good for any raccoons that are already using the property to come across the baits.

## **Can I get bait to spread around my property?**

The bait is not available for personal use. This project must be conducted in a controlled and scientific manner. The bait is an experimental use product approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and made available for this purpose to federal and state agencies.

## **Should I assume an animal does not have rabies if it ate the bait?**

No. Every raccoon bite or scratch must be considered a potential rabies exposure.