

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 2025, about 350,000 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.

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

Addison County

Bristol, Ferrisburgh, Lincoln, Monkton, New Haven, Panton, Starksboro, Vergennes, Waltham

Caledonia County

Barnet, Burke, Danville, Groton, Hardwick, Kirby, Lyndon, Newark, Peacham, Ryegate, Sheffield, Stannard, St. Johnsbury, Sutton, Walden, Waterford, Wheelock

Chittenden County

Bolton, Buel's Gore, Burlington, Charlotte, Colchester, Essex, Hinesburg, Huntington, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, South Burlington, St. George, Underhill, Westford, Williston, Winooski

Essex County

Brunswick, Concord, East Haven, Ferdinand, Granby, Guildhall, Lunenburg, Maidstone, Victory

Franklin County

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





May 2025 Rabies Vaccine Bait Drop

May 2025

Grand Isle County

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

Lamoille County

Belvidere, Cambridge, Elmore, Hyde Park, Johnson, Morrisville, Stowe, Waterville, Wolcott

Orange County

Newbury, Orange, Topsham, Williamstown

Orleans County

Barton, Craftsbury, Glover, Greensboro, Westmore

Washington County

Barre City, Barre Town, Berlin, Cabot, Calais, Duxbury, East Montpelier, Fayston, Marshfield, Middlesex, Montpelier, Moretown, Northfield, Plainfield, Waitsfield, Warren, Waterbury, Woodbury, Worcester

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. Times and locations of the bait drop are publicized in advance through the local media.

Will this project get rid of rabies?

It is designed to help reduce the likelihood of wildlife getting the disease and eventually eliminate rabies in the United States. It is important for people to take precautions against rabies: vaccinate pets (especially cats and dogs), 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 project 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 (see photo on the front page).

Is the bait harmful to children or pets?

Millions of baits have been dropped in the U.S. and Canada with no ill effects reported in people or pets. Even if you are exposed to the vaccine, you cannot get rabies from the vaccine or bait. While the bait is not harmful to children, pets, or other wildlife, it should not be handled or disturbed. If you come across the bait, leave it where it is so that it can be eaten by raccoons. If your dog picks up a bait, do not risk getting bitten by trying to remove the bait from the dog's mouth.

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.

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

No, the bait will not attract raccoons or other animals to your property but will target raccoons and other rabies vector species already utilizing the property.

Can I get bait to spread around my property?

We're sorry, no, 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.