



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



18th Annual Rabies Bait Drop Scheduled to Begin Monday



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BURLINGTON – Eighteen of the 31 animals that have tested positive for rabies so far this year have been in the state's most populated region, Chittenden County. The 18th Annual Rabies Bait Drop will take place (weather permitting) Aug. 11-18 targeting eight Vermont counties, including all of Chittenden County, to help stop the spread of the potentially fatal viral disease.

Baits will be dropped into rural parts of Vermont, primarily across the northern region along the Canadian border, from low-flying planes for two days. Hand placed baits will be distributed in urban areas as part of a nationally coordinated effort led by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (USDA).

One reason so many cases are being detected in Chittenden County, said State Public Health Veterinarian Robert Johnson, DVM, is that police in Burlington and South Burlington are doing a good job of capturing animals that are acting strangely and making sure they are tested.

"The USDA may increase the dose of vaccine in the baits this year due to the number of cases in densely populated areas," Dr. Johnson said.

The Health Department expects no adverse health effects for people (including children) or pets that may come into contact with the baits and vaccine. The bait cannot cause rabies but people should keep their dogs on a leash during the bait drop period.

- [Vermont Rabies Bait Drop Facts](#) 

Anyone who finds the bait should leave it untouched, unless it is discovered on a lawn or driveway. Remove the bait with a glove and wash your hands with soap and water.

The sweet-scented baits are slightly larger than a quarter and come in blister packs covered by a dark green waxy coating.

Rabies is a fatal viral disease found mainly in raccoons, foxes, bats and skunks that can infect domestic animals and people as well. The virus can spread through the bite, or contact with saliva, from an infected animal. Rabies vaccine – if given soon after a human is bitten by a rabid animal – is highly effective. Once the signs and symptoms of rabies start to appear, there is no treatment and the disease is almost always fatal.

Avoid any animal that shows strange behavior. Do not try to trap or capture the animal, but instead call the state's Rabies Hotline at 1-800-472-2437 (1-800-4-RABIES), or in-state 802-223-8697.

For more information visit: <http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/rabies/Rabies.aspx>

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