

# MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

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**TO:** City and County Health, Division of Animal and Plant Health, County EMA, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Law Enforcement, Maine Emergency Medical Services, Maine Animal Control Association, Division of Infectious Disease, Division of Public Health Systems, Municipal Offices, Regional Resource Centers

**FROM:** Dr. Siiri Bennett, State Epidemiologist

**SUBJECT:** Maine Animal Rabies 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Update – October 1-December 31, 2015

**DATE:** February 10, 2016

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**Animal Rabies 4<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Update  
October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015**

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) provides quarterly updates on animal rabies to veterinarians and other animal health professionals. This update is for the fourth quarter of 2015 (October 1-December 31).

Animals are tested at the Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) following exposure to a human or domestic animal. USDA APHIS Wildlife Services performs supplemental surveillance for rabies in animals with no human or domestic animal exposure. Table 1 lists animals testing positive for rabies from HETL and USDA during the fourth quarter of 2015. Table 2 lists the number animals tested for rabies by county in 2015. The number of rabid animals statewide may not be representative of the true incidence of animal rabies in Maine. See HETL’s website for regularly updated counts at:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/health-and-environmental-testing/rabies/rabies2015.htm>. Figures 1 and 2 show additional animal rabies data for Maine.

Table 1. Animals positive for rabies virus during the fourth quarter of 2015 (N=8)

	Date tested	Species	Town	County	Lab
1	10/05/2015	Skunk	Wiscasset	Lincoln	HETL
2	10/07/2015	Raccoon	Princeton	Washington	USDA
3	10/27/2015	Raccoon	Charleston	Penobscot	HETL
4	10/27/2015	Skunk	Norridgewock	Somerset	HETL
5	12/08/2015	Bat big brown	Eliot	York	HETL
6	12/10/2015	Raccoon	Madison	Somerset	HETL
7	12/21/2015	Skunk	Saint George	Knox	HETL
8	12/30/2015	Raccoon	West Paris	Oxford	HETL

Table 2. Animals tested for rabies by county, 2015, HETL and USDA

County	# positive HETL	# positive USDA	# tested HETL	# tested USDA	% positive
Androscoggin	4	0	37	0	10.8%
Aroostook	0	0*	7	222	0%
Cumberland	3	0	117	0	2.6%
Franklin	0	0	7	13	0%
Hancock	0	0	9	0	0%
Kennebec	6	0	71	0	8.5%
Knox	1	0	12	0	8.3%
Lincoln	1	0	13	0	7.7%
Oxford	1	0	19	0	5.3%
Penobscot	3	3	50	52	5.9%
Piscataquis	0	0	2	15	0%
Sagadahoc	0	0	20	0	0%
Somerset	5	0	14	7	23.8%
Waldo	0	0	14	0	0%
Washington	0	3	9	22	9.7%
York	4	0	45	0	8.9%
Out of state (NH)	0	0	1	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

\*One skunk from Aroostook tested indeterminate on 9/11/15 by Federal CDC.

## Animal Rabies 4<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Update October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

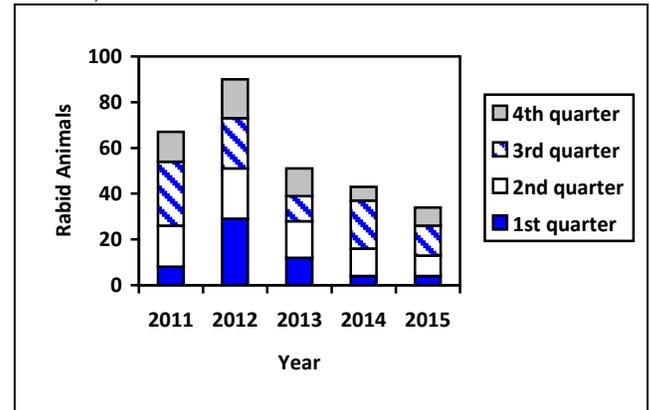
### Summary from this report:

- In the fourth quarter of 2015, 8 animals tested positive for rabies. In 2014, there were 6 rabid animals in the fourth quarter. The 5-year median of animal rabies in the fourth quarter is 13.
- In 2015, 34 animals tested positive for rabies out of 778 total animals tested, for a percent positive of 4.4%. This is the lowest count of rabies in Maine since 1994 when raccoon rabies first entered the state. In 2014, there were 43 rabid animals out of 607 total animals tested, for a percent positive of 7.1%. Nationally, 6.2% of animals tested positive for rabies (2013 data).
- Only wild animals – raccoons (15), big brown bats (9), skunks (8), and gray foxes (2) – tested positive for rabies in 2015. Positive animals were from seven counties, including Androscoggin (4), Cumberland (3), Kennebec (6), Knox (1), Lincoln (1), Oxford (1), Penobscot (6), Somerset (5), Washington (3), and York (4). Additionally, one skunk from Aroostook tested indeterminate at Federal CDC.

### Rabies Management:

- Rabies is spread when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes from an infected animal's saliva or neural (brain or spinal cord) tissue.
- Refer to the updated [Maine Rabies Management Guidelines 2012, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition](#) to assess exposures.
- Report possible human or domestic animal exposures to Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.
- Prompt recognition and reporting of exposures to medical professionals, public health, game wardens, and local animal control officers is critical to ensure appropriate medical and veterinary management.
- For more information, including on how to prevent exposures, see the Maine CDC rabies website at [www.mainepublichealth.gov/rabies](http://www.mainepublichealth.gov/rabies).

**Figure 1. Animal rabies by quarter and year in Maine, 2011-2015**



**Figure 2. Animal rabies by county in Maine, HETL and USDA, 2015**

