

MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE



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TO: Animal Care; Public Health Required

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SUBJECT: Maine Animal Rabies 4th Quarter Update (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2009)

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Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)
(Formerly Bureau of Health)

Animal Rabies 4th Quarterly Update

January 1 – December 31, 2009

The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) provides a quarterly update on animal rabies to veterinarians and other animal health professionals. This update may be used as an educational tool to increase the understanding of pet owners and other members of the public regarding the risk of rabies in Maine and in their communities.

This update is for rabid animals for the fourth quarter of 2009 or January 1 – December 31, 2009 (Table). The count of positive animals statewide may not be representative of the true incidence of animal rabies. Results are based on only those animals submitted for testing due to contact with a human or domestic animal.

Rabies is transmitted only when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes from saliva or other potentially infectious material such as neural tissue. Prompt recognition and reporting of possible exposures to medical professionals, public health officials, and local animal control officers is critical. Please refer to the Maine Rabies Management Guidelines (available at <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/ddc/epi/zoonotic/rabies.shtml>) when assessing a possible exposure. Maine CDC provides consultation and receives reports by phone at 1-800-821-5821 or fax 1-800-293-7534.

Table 1: Animal rabies by county, town and species – Maine, January 1 – December 31, 2009

County	Town	Animal Species				County Total
		Bat	Raccoon	Skunk	Other (Species)	
Androscoggin	Auburn				1(Fox, gray)	
	Danville		1			
	Greene	1		1		
	Leeds			1		
	Lewiston				1 (Fox, gray)	
	Lisbon		1			
	Mechanic Falls			1		
	Poland		1		1 (Fox, gray)	
	Sabattus		1			
Turner		2	1		14	
Aroostook	Masardis				1(Fox, red)	1
Cumberland	Casco			1		
	Cumberland		2			
	Falmouth		1			
	Gorham			1		
	New Gloucester		1	1		
	North Gorham			1		
	Portland	1			1 (Fox, gray)	
	Pownal		1			
	Raymond		1			
	South Portland		1			
	Westbrook		1			14
Hancock	Bucksport			1		
	Penobscot		1			2
Kennebec	Benton		1			
	Chelsea		1	1		
	Litchfield			1		

County	Town	Animal Species				County Total
		Bat	Raccoon	Skunk	Other (Species)	
	Monmouth		1			
	Mount Vernon		1			
	Oakland		1			
	Readfield	1				
	Rome				1 (Fox, gray)	
	Waterville	1				
	West Gardiner			1		
	Windsor			1		
	Winthrop		2			14
Knox	Camden	1				1
Lincoln	Whitefield				1 (Fox, gray)	1
Oxford	Otisfield		1			
	West Paris				1 (cat)	2
Penobscot	Hermon	1				
	Old Town		1			
	Stetson		1			3
Somerset	Cornville			1		1
York	Buxton		2			
	Limington		1			3
Species Total		6	28	14	7 fox , 1 cat	
Maine Total						56

Table 2: Animal rabies by county, town and species – USDA APHIS Wildlife Services*, January 1 – December 31, 2009

County	Town	Animal Species				County Total
		Bat	Raccoon	Skunk	Other (Species)	
Aroostook	North Amity		1			
	Sherman			1		2
Penobscot	Patten			3		
	Staceyville			1		4
Species Total			1			
Maine Total			1	5		6

* USDA APHIS Wildlife Services perform surveillance testing on animals with no human or domestic animal exposure.

Announcements:

- What to do when an overdue dog, cat or ferret presents for a rabies booster? The Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control (available at <http://www.nasphv.org/documentsCompendia.html>) recommends: “If a previously vaccinated animal is overdue for a booster, it should be revaccinated. Immediately following the booster, the animal is considered currently vaccinated and should be placed on a vaccination schedule according to the labeled duration of the vaccine used.” Rabies vaccines used in state and local rabies control programs should have at least 3-years duration of immunity.
- Can Maine veterinarians waive the rabies vaccination requirement for dog licensure under certain circumstances? Yes, there is a provision in Maine rule to allow for a letter of exemption that states: “A letter of exemption from vaccination may be submitted for licensure, if a medical reason exists that precludes the vaccination of the dog. Qualifying letters must be in the form of a written statement, signed by a licensed veterinarian, that includes a description of the dog and the medical reason that precludes vaccination. If the medical reason is temporary, the letter shall indicate a time of expiration of the exemption.”