



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Animal Control

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FOX TESTS POSITIVE FOR RABIES IN GRAY'S CREEK

FAYETTEVILLE – The State Public Health Lab in Raleigh today confirmed a case of rabies in a fox sent for testing from the Gray's Creek area of Cumberland County. This is the third rabies case reported this week in the county; there have been 10 cases since Jan. 1.

On Tuesday, July 16, nine dogs from Crittercreek Road off N.C. Highway 87 came in contact with a fox. The dogs' owners said the dogs attacked and killed the fox. Animal Control picked up the fox and sent it for testing. Animal Control officers will be in the area notifying residents of the rabies case.

The nine dogs were not vaccinated against rabies. If a pet is not currently vaccinated against rabies and is exposed to the saliva or nervous tissue of a proven rabid animal, state law requires the pet be euthanized or quarantined for six months.

All pet owners are urged to check the vaccination status of their pets. If pets are not vaccinated or are due for a booster shot, they should be taken to a local veterinarian for rabies vaccination immediately.

The first sign of rabies in animals is a change in behavior. Animals may become aggressive, attacking for no reason, or they may become very quiet. Wild animals can lose their fear of people and act tame. Rabid animals may walk in a circle, drag a leg, or fall over. Some cannot swallow so they are not able to eat or drink and often drool. Animals usually die within a week after first becoming ill.

Avoiding wild animals and keeping your distance from stray dogs and cats is the first step in preventing an animal bite. Any pet, which appears to have been in a fight while outside, should be handled very cautiously and seen by a veterinarian.

If you are bitten or scratched by an animal:

- Immediately wash the wound under running water for at least 10 minutes with lots of soap. Seek medical attention/advice.
- Call Animal Control at 321-6852 Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call the Sheriff's Office at 323-1500 after 5 p.m., weekends and holidays.
- Go to the emergency room.

It is also important to vaccinate your pets for rabies and keep their shots current. Pet owners are reminded that all dogs and cats must be vaccinated against rabies, as required by state law. Pet owners are subject to a fine of \$100 for each unvaccinated dog or cat. Pets must be vaccinated when they reach the age of four months.

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