



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Animal Control

Contact: Dr. John Lauby, Director

Telephone: 910-321-6857

E-mail: jlauby@co.cumberland.nc.us

TWO CONFIRMED CASES OF RABIES IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY

FAYETTEVILLE - This morning the State Public Health Lab in Raleigh confirmed two cases of rabies from raccoons that were sent for testing.

On Saturday, July 13, three dogs in the Stedman/Cedar Creek Road and Highway 210 crossroads area came in contact with a raccoon. The dogs' owner said that her three dogs were fighting with the raccoon. Animal Control picked up the raccoon and sent it to the lab for testing. Two of the three dogs were not vaccinated; therefore, the owner will be required according to North Carolina law to quarantine these dogs for six months at a veterinarian clinic.

On Monday, July 15, Animal Control picked up a dead raccoon from Butler Nursery Road in the Gray's Creek area. The raccoon was observed attacking a cat by a resident. The resident distracted the raccoon and the animal started toward the resident in an aggressive manner. The resident shot and killed the raccoon. The cat is an outdoor cat and ran off after the attack. The cat is still loose after it was exposed to rabies.

There have now been nine cases of rabies in the county since Jan. 1. Animal Control officers will be in both areas today notifying residents.

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.

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- 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.