



## ***St. Lawrence County Public Health Department***

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### **Press Release**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Raccoon Reported to Have Rabies in St. Lawrence County**

**Canton, NY** — The New York State Department of Health Wadsworth laboratory has reported to the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department (SLCPHD) that a raccoon has tested positive for rabies. The raccoon was located in the western part of the county, bordering Jefferson County. The raccoon was submitted by SLCPHD for testing after a report of the raccoon biting an individual. This is the first animal to test positive for rabies in St. Lawrence County this year.

Rabies is a deadly virus that can be spread to people from the saliva of infected animals. Rabies is usually spread through an animal bite, but can also be spread through a scratch. Animals most likely to spread rabies are raccoons, skunks, bats, and foxes. Domestic animals, such as cats and dogs, may spread the virus if they come in contact with an infected wild animal.

#### **Protect your Family and Pets Against Rabies**

- Keep pets and livestock up to date with rabies vaccinations, supervise pets while they are outside, and feed them inside.
- Do not feed, touch, or adopt wild animals, or stray dogs or cats.
- Do not attract wild animals to your home or yard. Tightly lock garbage and compost bins, and store bird seed and pet food inside. If you do have a wild animal living around your home, call an animal control officer to remove the animal for a fee.
- Wild animals may be submitted for rabies testing if they have had contact with humans, pets, or if they display unusual behavior.
- Those who have been exposed to the saliva or brain tissue of a suspected rabid animal should wash all wounds, seek medical attention immediately, and report any animal bites or rabies exposures to St. Lawrence County Public Health (315) 386-2325.
- If you suspect your pet or livestock has made contact with the saliva or brain tissue of a rabid animal contact your veterinarian for medical care and contact St. Lawrence County Public Health to determine what steps must be taken next.
- Report all animal bites or contact with wild animals to Public Health, and contain the animal for testing if possible.

For any additional questions regarding rabies, please call the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department at (315) 386-2325 or visit

<https://www.stlawco.gov/Departments/PublicHealth/RabiesControl>

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