

WILDLIFE RABIES VACCINATION PROGRAM – WESTERN NEW YORK

A cooperative effort involving the Niagara and Erie County Health Departments, the NYS Department of Health, Cornell University, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Tuscarora and Seneca Nations, and Others

The Wildlife Oral Rabies Vaccination (ORV) Program seeks to control and eventually eliminate terrestrial rabies in Western NY. The evaluation of an experimental vaccine will also be continued.

What: The oral wildlife rabies vaccine (ONRAB®) is contained in green baits comprised of vegetable shortening, wax, icing sugar, vegetable oil and flavoring. Approximately 400,000 vaccine-laden baits will be distributed in Western NY.

How: Raccoons are vaccinated against rabies when they eat the wildlife rabies vaccine that is contained within the Ultralite® baits. Fixed-wing aircraft (white with red and blue trim) are used to distribute baits over rural areas, vehicles are used in dense residential neighborhoods, and helicopters (red with black trim) distribute baits over less-populated, residential areas. Parallel flight lines are established 250 meters (0.16 mile) apart in helicopter and fixed-wing ORV zones.

When: Aerial distribution (weather dependent) will start on or about 19 August with fixed-wing aircraft. Helicopter distribution will start on or about 24 August. Vehicle distribution will be scheduled during late August or early September.

Where: Niagara and Erie Counties.

Why: Terrestrial rabies cases have persisted in Niagara and Erie Counties since 1995. Rabies is nearly always fatal in unvaccinated animals, a very costly health threat that impacts people, domestic animals and wildlife. Immunization of wildlife will help to reduce the number of rabies cases and prevent the continued spread of the fatal virus.

Who: The vaccination program is a cooperative effort involving the Niagara and Erie County Departments of Health, Cornell University, USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services, the NYS Department of Health, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Tuscarora and Seneca Nations, and many other cooperators.

ORV Recommendations:

- **WASH YOUR HANDS IMMEDIATELY** if you come into direct contact with the vaccine or bait, then call (1-888-574-6656)
- Supervise children's outdoor activities during bait distribution and for one week afterward
- Confine dogs and cats indoors and observe leash laws during the bait distribution interval and for one week afterward. This will increase the probability of raccoon vaccination and will decrease the chance of pets finding the baits
- The baits and vaccines are not harmful to domestic animals; however, an animal may vomit if it consumes several baits. **DO NOT RISK BEING BITTEN WHILE TRYING TO REMOVE A BAIT FROM YOUR PET'S MOUTH**
- Call (1-888-574-6656) if you see your pet with bait in its mouth and cannot read the label
- If baits are observed in the environment, please leave them alone. Labels identify the bait: ("Rabies Vaccine DO NOT EAT, Live adenovirus vector. MNR 1-888-574-6656")
- If a bait is intact and out in the open where pets or children may find it, please toss the bait under trees or bushes. Wear gloves or use a plastic bag to pick up the bait
- If a bait is broken and the liquid vaccine is visible, wear gloves, and cover the bait and affected area with a 1:10 solution of bleach and water, place the bait in a plastic bag, and dispose of the bag in the household trash

**IN THE EVENT OF DIRECT CONTACT
WITH A BAIT OR VACCINE, PLEASE
CALL THE NY STATE HEALTH
DEPARTMENT:
888-574-6656**

General Information: Rabies is a viral infection that affects the nervous system of raccoons and other mammals, including people. The disease is usually fatal after clinical signs of infection occur. Wildlife vaccination will decrease the chance of human and domestic animal contact with wild, terrestrial rabid animals. Rabies is usually transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. However, the virus may also be transmitted when the saliva of a rabid animal comes into contact with cut, open, or scratched skin lesions. To reduce the risk of rabies exposure:

- Verify that your animals have current rabies vaccinations, including dogs, cats, ferrets, livestock and horses
- Keep pets (dogs, cats, ferrets) on a leash
- House pets and livestock indoors during evenings and nights
- Do not touch or have contact with any animal other than your own
- Do not touch dying or dead animals. If you must move a dead animal, use a shovel, wear heavy rubber gloves and double bag the carcass
- Warn your family against approaching any unknown animal -- wild or domestic -- especially those acting in an unusual manner
- Instruct your children to tell you immediately if they were bitten or scratched by any animal
- If a bat is found in a room where adults or children were sleeping, or if an adult enters a room and finds a bat with a child, **DO NOT RELEASE THE BAT**, notify the County Health Department immediately

- Do not leave pet food outdoors or feed unknown animals. Discourage unknown animals from seeking food or shelter near your home
- Do not attempt to trap wildlife on your property. Contract with a state-licensed, professional nuisance wildlife control officer
- Keep garbage containers tightly covered and avoid storing any food outside
- Remember that New York State law requires all dogs, cats and domesticated ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies

Individuals bitten or scratched by any animal should immediately contact their physicians or seek medical assistance at a hospital emergency room.

For more information regarding rabies and wildlife vaccination, please visit the following websites:

Niagara County Department of Health at:

<http://www.niagaracounty.com/health/Services/Environmental-Health/Rabies/Rabies-Prevention>

Erie County Department of Health at:

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=rabies-information>

Merial, Limited at: www.raboral.com

USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services at:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife-damage/rabies>

NYS Department of Health at:

<http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/rabies/vaccfact.htm>

US Centers for Disease Control:

<http://www.cdc.gov/RABIES/>

