

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adirondack Bank Building, 5th Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DANIEL W. GILMORE, PH.D.
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
SUPERVISOR-IN-CHARGE

ADMINISTRATION

Phone: (315) 798-6400 ☎ Fax: (315) 266-6138



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For Immediate Release

Contact: Bobbi Jo Girven, Program Coordinator
798-3676

Rabid Fox Invades Clayville Home and Barn

A grey fox that attacked several domesticated animals including a cat that was inside a Clayville home has tested positive for rabies, Oneida County Health Department officials announced today. This is the first confirmed case of rabies in Oneida County in 2009.

The fox first jumped up onto the porch of the house and acting erratically, attacked some patio furniture. It managed to find its way inside the house where it then attacked and bit a cat that was not current on its rabies vaccinations. A resident and a second man doing work at the home managed to chase the fox out of the house.

Later the same day, the fox attacked and bit a dog who lived a short distance from the scene of the original attack. It then found its way into a barn on the property and got into a stall where it attacked a horse. The horse managed to kill the fox during the night. The animal was taken to Oneida for testing and rabies was confirmed on Friday.

The two people who had possible exposure have begun rabies treatment. The owners of the cat and dog have agreed to quarantine their pets for six months while the owner of the horse has not yet decided whether to quarantine the animal or have the animal euthanized.

"This is another unfortunate instance of having to quarantine a pet because it was not properly vaccinated," said Bobbi Jo Girven, Coordinator for the Rabies Prevention and Treatment Program for the Oneida County Health Department. She added, *"We hold a rabies clinic each year in the community where these pets live, but because her cat was kept in the house the owner didn't think it was necessary to have it vaccinated against rabies."*

Girven said the second in a series of nine rabies clinics being conducted by the Health Department this year will be held Thursday, March 26th from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Trenton Town Hall in Barneveld. She urged all dog, cat and ferret owners to have their pets vaccinated if they are 3 months or older as required by law.

Residents are reminded wild animals infected with rabies will act erratically and often try to get into houses. She cautioned people to avoid contact with wild animals and to stay indoors should a wild animal come into your yard.

For more information on rabies prevention or for a complete schedule of rabies immunization clinics call the Oneida County Health Department at 798-5064 or visit our web site at www.ocgov.net.