

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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# NEWS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

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## Unwarranted Rabies Fears Shouldn't Put a Damper on Parade

***NYSDOH Spokesperson: '...Attend Without Concerns of Increased Risks...'***

State and local Health Department officials are in agreement that last week's finding of a rabid animal in the City of Rome in no way poses a threat to those planning to attend Saturday's "Honor America Days" parade, Dr. Gayle Jones, Oneida County Director of Health said today.

*"We have fully discussed the case of the rabid kitten found last week in the area of North George Street in the city with State Health Department officials, and they concur that the incident does not represent any unusual threat to people who will line the parade route on Saturday," Jones said.*

Three persons, two of them children, found and had contact with a feral kitten in the city. The kitten later tested positive for rabies requiring the three to begin post-exposure prophylaxis.

Claire Pospisil, a spokesperson for the NYSDOH, responding to inquiries from County and City officials said, *"People should attend the parade without concerns about increased risk for rabies and should follow the advice provided by the Oneida County Health Department to always avoid contact with stray animals."*

Rome Public Safety Commissioner James Masucci stressed the fact that the public's safety and well being is of tantamount importance when planning any public event. *"Despite all the pre-planning that goes into an event like the 'Honor America Days' parade, changes would be made if there was the slightest chance a situation posed a threat to any of the attendees,"* Masucci said.

The parade gets underway Saturday morning at 10:00 am at the intersection of North James Street and Chestnut Street. It follows a route south to West Embargo Street before turning onto North George Street. It then proceeds south to West Dominic Street and ends at the Fort Stanwyx Memorial.

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