

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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OCHD Schedules Rabies Clinics for 2013

The first in a series of rabies clinics sponsored by the Oneida County Health Department in 2013 is scheduled for **Saturday, March 9th at the Sherrill Community Arts Center** located at 139 E. Hamilton Avenue **from 9:00 – 11:00 am**, a Health Department official said today.

"We have tentatively scheduled nine clinics throughout the County, with additional dates and locations to be added," Bobbi Jo Kahl, Rabies Prevention and Treatment Program Coordinator said. *"Nearly 1200 pets were vaccinated at thirteen clinics held in 2012 and we hope to exceed that number in 2013,"* Kahl added.

New York State Health Law requires all dogs, cats and ferrets 3-months and older receive the rabies vaccine. Dogs and cats must be vaccinated twice within 12-months and then once every three years. Ferrets must be vaccinated annually. Pets receive a 1-year certificate if no proof of prior vaccination is provided. Pets must be leashed or in a pet carrier. A ten dollar donation is requested to help defray the cost of the clinic.

In 2012, 144 animals were submitted for rabies testing, with bats making up more than half that number. Oneida County reported seven animals testing positive for rabies and 96 patients who received Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEPs) as a result of possible or confirmed rabies exposure.

The mid-Atlantic raccoon epizootic strain of rabies is widespread throughout Oneida County and is the most serious disease spread by animals to humans. Once exposed to the virus, a person almost always dies from the resulting infection without prompt treatment. In addition to vaccinating pets, the Health Department says you can reduce the risks posed by the disease by following these tips:

- Never touch or feed wild or unknown animals.
- Never touch dead or sick animals and warn children to avoid contact with strange animals.
- Do not leave unattended pets tied outside.
- 'Animal proof' your property. Cover trash cans and do not leave pet food outdoors.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you have contact with an animal that may be rabid
- Report all animal bites to the Oneida County Health Department.

For more information on rabies treatment and prevention or for a complete clinic schedule, call the Oneida County Health Department at **(315)798-5064** or visit our web site at **ocgov.net/oneida/health**.