

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION

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### News Release

March 28, 2016  
For Immediate Release

Contact: Bobbi Kahl 315.798.6400

### Rabies Awareness Should Be Year-Round

In the Town of Ava, a dog that was tied up outside was in a fight with a skunk. The owner was able to kill the skunk while remaining a safe distance away to protect the dog from further harm. The skunk tested positive for rabies. The dog will be quarantined for six months due to the incident.

It is important to understand that not only family pets can be exposed to rabies. Working farms, hobby farms, and people who just have one or two farm animals should vaccinate for rabies.

Signs to look for in a rabid animal are: staggering, convulsions, choking, frothing at the mouth and paralysis. Many animals will make unusual sounds. "If you see these symptoms with an animal please stay away from the animal and keep your pets away as well," comments Bobbi Kahl of the Oneida County Health Department.

Health department officials say there are things you can do to reduce the risks rabies for yourself, your family, your pets, and livestock:

- Keep your pets' rabies vaccinations up-to-date. Dogs, cats and ferrets 3-months and older must be vaccinated. The Oneida County Health Department conducts a number of rabies clinics throughout the county.
- Maintain control of your pets by keeping cats and ferrets indoors and keeping dogs under direct supervision.
- Do not touch or feed wild or unknown animals
- Do not touch dead or sick animals and warn children to avoid wild or strange animals
- Walk your pet on a leash, and keep your pets indoors at night
- Spay or neuter your pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets that may not be properly cared for or vaccinated regularly.
- Reduce your chances of contact by 'animal proofing' your property
- Learn the signs of rabies in animals
- Seek immediate medical attention if you have contact with an animal you think may be rabid
- Call animal control to remove all stray animals from your neighborhood since these animals may be unvaccinated or ill.
- Report all animal bites to the Health Department -798-5064

**So in addition to vaccinating your pets, the community needs to be aware that when getting a dog from a friend or Craigslist and the animal doesn't come with a shot history, the new owner should take the animal to a vet for shots. It is their responsibility as a pet owner to keep up on the shots of their animal.**

For additional information: [www.ocgov.net](http://www.ocgov.net)  
<http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>