

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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News Release

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Rabid Skunk Euthanized in Marcy *Rabies Awareness Should Be Year-Round*

A skunk that tested positive for rabies was euthanized after fighting with a dog in the Town of Marcy.

The skunk was euthanized on Oct. 13 after it got into a fight with a dog and was removed by professionals after entering the pet owner's home. It later tested positive for rabies at Wadsworth Laboratory.

The dog was not current on its rabies vaccinations and has been quarantined for six months. The pet owner is undergoing a rabies post-exposure vaccination.

Once infected, rabies is a virus that has a 100 percent fatality rate when left untreated, in mammals including humans. Some 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 Phyllis D. Ellis, Director of the Oneida County Health Department.

According to Health Department officials, here are some 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: 315-798-5064

*In addition to vaccinating your pets, health officials recommend the community be aware that when getting an animal 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.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>