

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

*Adirondack Bank Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501*

**ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.**  
ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE



**PHYLLIS D. ELLIS, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E**  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

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## ADMINISTRATION

*Phone: (315) 798-6400 ☎ Fax: (315) 266-6138 ☎ Email: [publichealth@ocgov.net](mailto:publichealth@ocgov.net)*

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**September 28, 2018**

**Contact: Dan Gilmore 315-798-5064**

## **Rabies Exposure in Oneida County**

On September 26, 2018 a raccoon was spotted in the Town of Bridgewater in Oneida County. The raccoon got into a fight with a small dog. The owner of the dog intervened and sustained a laceration in the process. The raccoon tested positive for rabies on September 27th. The owner of the dog is receiving Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis.

Experts are working to determine if the dog is up-to-date on its rabies vaccine. It is possible the dog may need to be quarantined for six months. This incident highlights the importance of making sure pets are up to date on vaccines and avoiding contact with animals that may be rabid.

Once infected, rabies is a virus that has a 100 percent fatality rate when left untreated, in mammals including humans. Public Health recommends the following precautions to protect yourself and your family from possible exposure to rabies:

- Report any sick or strange acting wildlife
- Vaccinate pets and livestock. New York State law requires that all dogs, cats and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies by 4 months of age. Vaccinating your domestic animal not only provides protection for the animal, but vaccinated pets act as a barrier to keep the rabies virus from spreading between wild animals and people.
- Vaccination is also recommended for livestock with frequent human contact.
- Do not feed wildlife or stray animals and discourage them from seeking food near your home.
- Do not feed strays.
- Do not approach an unknown animal, either wild or domestic, especially if it is acting in a strange or unusual manner.
- Report all animal bites and any contact with bats to the Health Department in your county. Human rabies can be prevented after exposure by administering a series of shots.
- Keep garbage cans tightly covered and avoid storing any food outside.
- Children should be instructed to tell an adult immediately if they were bitten or scratched by any animal.
- If an unvaccinated pet comes in contact with rabid or suspected rabies the pet must be quarantined for six months.
- Vaccinated pets that come in contact with rabid or suspected rabies animal must be given a booster rabies vaccination within five days of the contact.

**Please remember:** be very careful when “rescuing” stray cats or dogs, stay away from strays, even professionals need to be very cautious around strays and feral cats, and make sure pets, even cats, are current with their rabies shots.

**The Oneida County Health Department has their next Rabies Clinic on October 19th at the Sherrill Community Activities Center (CAC) from 3:30-5:30pm.**

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