



MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rabid bat found in St. Charles; seventh Kane case in 2008

The Kane County Health Department is reporting that a bat that tested positive for rabies was found in a St. Charles home. The bat was found in the home's sleeping quarters, which led to the potential exposure of two residents.

This is the seventh bat found in Kane County this year. Other positive bats in 2008 were found in St. Charles (for a total of two), Geneva, North Aurora and three in Aurora.

In 2007, Kane recorded five positive bats, and one in 2006.

Health Department Executive Director Paul Kuehnert said that it is important to keep all pets—dogs, cats, ferrets, etc.—up-to-date with their rabies vaccinations. “Not only does the vaccine protect the pet, it also serves as barrier of protection for people,” Kuehnert said. “Even indoor pets should be vaccinated, as illustrated by the fact that many of the bat cases are found indoors.”

Rabies is a deadly disease that attacks the central nervous system and can only be confirmed in a laboratory. Parents should tell their children to avoid wild animals, especially ones that are not acting normally, such as a nocturnal animal active in the daytime or one that does not show fear of humans.

Bats are the primary carriers of rabies in Illinois. A case of human rabies has not been reported in Illinois since 1954

(MORE)

More prevention guidelines include:

- Some rabid bats may exhibit no obvious abnormalities, so all contact with bats should be avoided.
- People should NOT be allowed to occupy a room in which bats are found, until it is certain that no bats remain in the room and that the room has been sealed to prevent their re-entry.
- If a bat is found indoors, the structure should be thoroughly inspected for the presence of roosting bats.
- Exclusion remains the best way to prevent and control bats in a structure.
- Keep pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal or exposed to a bat, seek veterinary assistance for your pet immediately.
- Call the local animal control agency to remove contained stray animals in your neighborhood.

More information about rabies is available by calling the Health Department at (630) 208-3801 and asking for the Communicable Disease program. Exclusion remains the best way to prevent and control bats in a structure. Information about exclusion can be found by logging on to the Illinois Department of Public Health Web site at <http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/pcbats.htm>. For information about a referral for capturing bats or for submitting specimens for testing, please call Kane County Animal Control at (630) 232-3555.

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