



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.
State Surgeon General

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PUBLIC CONTACT: Escambia Co. Health Dept.
Div. of Environmental Health (850) 595-6700

Rabies Alert

Rabies alert issued for central and northern Escambia County, Florida,
from Muscogee Road to Alabama state line

PENSACOLA – Dr. John Lanza, Director of the Escambia County (FL) Health Department today issued a rabies alert for the central to northern geographical region of Escambia County, Florida. This is in response to three wild animals that tested positive for rabies.

Escambia residents should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Escambia County (FL). Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not give a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

This rabies alert will last for 60 days and covers central and northern Escambia County, FL including the following area boundaries:

- Southern boundary is Muscogee Road Hwy 184 and Beck's Lake Road
- Eastern boundary is the Escambia River
- Western boundary is the Perdido River
- Northern boundary is the Alabama state line

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and humans should avoid all wildlife contact, especially with raccoons, bats, and foxes.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is usually fatal to warm-blooded animals and to humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies-specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

The following advice is issued:

- All pets should have current rabies immunizations.
- Avoid contact with all wildlife, especially raccoons, bats, and foxes.
- All persons with any unusual exposure incident, or bites, with a wild animal should be evaluated by a physician to determine their need for treatment.

- For general questions pertaining to rabies in animals, contact the Escambia County Health Department's Environmental Health Division at (850) 595-6700.
- Secure outside garbage in covered containers to avoid attracting wild animals.
- Do not leave pet food outside as this practice also attracts other animals.
- For questions regarding the health of an animal, contact a veterinarian.
- Veterinarian staff and animal control staff should be alert for animals encountered with signs suspicious for rabies and contact the Escambia County Health Department's Environmental Health Division at (850) 595-6700.

For further information on rabies, go to the Florida Department of Health website: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/epi/diseases.htm or contact the Escambia County Health Department, Environmental Health office at (850) 595-6700.

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