



Lake County General Health District

NEWS RELEASE
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LAKE COUNTY GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT

RACCOON RABIES VACCINATION TO BEGIN AUGUST 20, 2014

The Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) will be cooperating with the USDA National Rabies Management Program in the annual oral rabies vaccination (ORV) project to immunize raccoons, skunks and other wild animals against rabies. The ORV will happen on August 20-22, 2014 with baiting by airplane in rural areas. Ground baiting in areas with more people will be done from vehicles and on foot, and will begin in Lake County on August 25 and is expected to be complete by the first week in September. The vaccine is contained in a 1 by 1 ½ inch “Army green” blister pack with a sweet waxy coating. When the animal bites the blister pack, the vaccine coats the mouth and throat and protects the animal from getting rabies.

Humans and pets cannot get rabies from touching the bait, but dogs may be attracted to the odor of the bait. Be aware of the bait. Be sure to watch your dogs while they are outdoors and keep them on a short leash during the days when baiting is taking place. Although the bait is not harmful to them, they should be prevented from eating it so it is available for the wild animals. If your dog gets the bait, do not risk being bitten by trying to remove it from the dog’s mouth. If you find bait, do not touch it with bare hands. Use a glove or plastic bag to toss bait that is not leaking into a tree line, and then wash your hands. The Health District asks that you call us at (440) 350-2543 whenever you or your pet comes into contact with bait.

The baiting project, along with other management strategies over the past ten years, has been very successful in eliminating raccoon variant rabies from Lake County and surrounding areas. With the exception of an occasional bat, the last rabies-positive animal happened in 2011. Due to this success, the size of the bait zone will most likely be reduced and possibly eliminated in the future. This makes it very important for the public to report sick or strange-acting wildlife to the LCGHD.

Rabies is a viral disease that affects animals and people. The virus is found in the saliva of affected animals (most often raccoons, skunks, and bats) and is spread by a bite or scratch. Regular rabies vaccination of pets, as well as avoiding contact with wildlife is the best protection against this deadly virus. For more information about rabies or the ORV project, please visit www.lcghd.org or www.odh.ohio.gov.

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