

## Hyde County Health Department

1151 Main Street, P. O. Box 100  
Swan Quarter, NC 27885  
Phone 252-926-4200 Fax 252-926-3702  
[www.hydehealth.com](http://www.hydehealth.com)

For Release: Immediate  
Contact: Wesley P. Smith, Health Director

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(252) 926-4387

### First Confirmed Case of Rabies in Hyde County

**SWAN QUARTER, NC** - The Hyde County Health Department reports the first confirmed case of rabies in Hyde County in 2010. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, a raccoon broke into a seven (7) foot wire fence dog pen on Jacks Road in the Engelhard community, attacking two (2) dogs within the pen. The owner of the dogs removed the raccoon with a "catch stick". After removing the raccoon from the pen, the raccoon escaped and climbed a tree. The raccoon was shot and killed by the dog's owner, and subsequently delivered to the Health Department by Hyde County's Animal Control Officer. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the head of the raccoon was sent to the State Laboratory of Public Health for rabies testing. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the State Lab informed the Health Department that the raccoon tested positive for rabies.

If you are bitten by a wild or stray animal, contact a physician immediately. Bites from wild terrestrial carnivores present a high risk of rabies exposure. Notify animal control immediately if you have any exposure to raccoons, skunks, foxes, coyotes, bobcats or large rodents such as beavers, so that the animal can be collected for testing if possible. Animal control agencies are listed online at [www.ncarca.com](http://www.ncarca.com).

If there is a chance you may have been exposed to rabies, or if the animal is caught and it tests positive for rabies, you may need to get a series of shots to prevent rabies disease. You cannot wait to see if you get sick, because there is no known cure once the disease develops.

Human rabies vaccine is available for people who have been exposed to rabies.

Rabies is a fatal disease, but people can protect themselves and their families by following these common-sense guidelines. And if people do come into contact with a potentially rabid animal, it is important to know to see a doctor right away.

For more information on rabies, see the N.C. Division of Public Health's rabies website at [www.rabies.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.rabies.ncdhhs.gov), or contact Hugh Watson, Environmental Health Specialist, at 252-926-4380.