



Hyde County Health Department

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For Release: Immediate
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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 2011. On March 8th, a raccoon attacked a dog on a chain at a residence on Mapletown Road in the Swan Quarter community. The owner of the dog killed the raccoon with a shovel and notified the Hyde County Animal Control Contract Officer, who delivered the raccoon to the Hyde County Health Department. On March 9th, the head of the raccoon was sent to the State Laboratory of Public Health for rabies testing. On March 10th, 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.

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, or contact Hugh Watson, Environmental Health Specialist, at 252-926-4380.