

October 16, 2018

## HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE RABIES ALERT

### Contact:

Communications Office  
786-336-1276



### Immediate Release

**Miami** –The Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County received confirmation of a second cat that tested positive for rabies in North Miami Beach. This unvaccinated stray cat had to be euthanized after a good Samaritan identified it as injured or ill-appearing. Currently, one human exposure has been identified and is receiving rabies post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). An additional person reported by the good Samaritan as scratched is being identified for PEP.

This is the eighth confirmed rabid animal (six raccoons and two cats) identified in Miami-Dade for 2018.

The rabies alert for the new area will be issued for 60 days, ending on December 14, 2018. The Miami-Dade County boundaries for this alert are as follows:

- NE 186th Street to the North,
- Royal Glades Canal to the South,
- West Dixie Hwy to the East,
- NE 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the West

An animal with rabies could infect other wild or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All dogs, cats, and ferrets should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm-blooded animals and 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.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Miami-Dade Animal Services at 3-1-1.
- Call 3-1-1 to report any stray dogs in your neighborhood or private property owners can hire a nuisance wildlife trapper for removal of wildlife. For a list of wildlife trappers, visit <https://public.myfwc.com/HGM/NWT/NWTSearch.aspx>
- **Do not** handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- **Do not** leave food sources out for wildlife such as pet food or unsecured garbage.
- **Avoid** contact with stray and feral animals.
- **Never** adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children **never** to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.

- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas, where they might come in contact with people and pets.
- **Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County at 305-324-2400.**

For further information on rabies, go to <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html> or call the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County at 305-324-2400, or Animal Services at 3-1-1.

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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