

NEWS RELEASE

Gray Fox Positive for Rabies – Town of Poughkeepsie

The Dutchess County Department of Health confirmed a positive rabies test in a fox captured on Hart Drive in the Town of Poughkeepsie on July 30th.

The Department is asking anyone who is aware of any contact between a gray fox and any person or domestic animal within the past two weeks to contact the Dutchess County Department of Health at [\(845\) 486-3404](tel:845-486-3404).

The Dutchess County Department of Health also reminds individuals that, in addition to foxes, other animals can carry and transmit rabies. These include raccoons, bats, and skunks, as well as domesticated animals like dogs, cats, ferrets, and livestock. Any exposure to a potentially rabid animal through either a bite or its saliva should be reported to the Dutchess County Department of Health at [845-486-3404](tel:845-486-3404). Steps should be taken to safely capture the potentially rabid animal for follow-up.

Rabies is a serious illness and can be fatal. Don't delay evaluation if you think you have been exposed to rabies.

In Dutchess County, nearly 50 individuals undergo rabies post-exposure treatment annually, many of these are due to contact with animals that were not captured and therefore not tested. Capturing and testing the animal ensures that those who were exposed to rabies will receive lifesaving treatment, and eliminates unnecessary treatment of individuals who were not exposed.

“This event underscores the importance of pet vaccination,” said Commissioner of Health, Dr. Kari Reiber. Dutchess County Department of Health offers free rabies vaccination clinics regularly to ensure access to vaccination to all residents. To find out when the next clinic will be, visit www.dutchessny.gov or email healthinfo@dutchessny.gov.

Rabies prevention strategies are available at www.cdc.gov/rabies; and www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/rabies/

For Further Information:

Kari Reiber, MD, Commissioner of Health [\(845\) 486-3432](tel:845-486-3432)

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