



Chippewa County Department of Public Health

711 N Bridge Street, Room 121, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
P: 715.726.7900 / 1.800.400.3678 / F: 715.726.7910
www.co.chippewa.wi.us/ccdph



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Kristen Kelm RN, Community Health Division Manager, Chippewa County Department of Public Health, 715-738-2605

Rabid Bat in Chippewa County

(Chippewa Falls, WI)— The Chippewa County Department of Public Health would like to alert the public regarding a recent report of a bat testing positive for rabies in Chippewa County. This bat was located in a residential setting following an encounter with a family pet. Prior to this, there have not been reports of rabies in samples submitted from Chippewa County since 2015.

This recent report of a bat with rabies is an opportunity to remind people about what they can do to protect themselves from rabies:

- Vaccinate dogs, cats, ferrets and other animals against rabies and check to make sure their vaccinations are up-to-date.
- Do not keep wild or exotic animals as pets.
- Do not handle wild animals.
- Teach your children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic.
- Prevent bats from entering your home.
- If you or a family member get bitten or scratched, wash the wound immediately with liberal amounts of soap and water, and report to your physician or urgent care as soon as possible, your local public health department during business hours, or local law enforcement if the incident has occurred with a domestic animal. Any exposure (bite or non-bite) to bats should be discussed as soon as possible with your physician or your local health department.
- If your pet has been in a fight with a wild animal, please contact your veterinarian and local health department.

In the last ten years, animals reported with rabies in Wisconsin include bats, skunks, a cow, a cat, a dog and a fox. Wild animals are a particular risk, bats and skunks are the most commonly reported animal with rabies in Wisconsin and can expose domestic animals and people. Most exposures to humans or animals occur through a bite or scratch of a rabid animal.

For more information regarding rabies in animals, please contact Chippewa County Department of Public Health at 715-726-7900. For more information specific to bats and rabies visit <https://datcp.wi.gov/Documents/BatsAndRabiesDAH035.pdf> .

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