



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Health Department Issues Rabies Precautions for Sewickley Residents**

**PITTSBURGH** – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is informing residents in the Borough of Sewickley that a rabid raccoon attacked a dog earlier this week in the 700 block of Hill Street. The raccoon is no longer alive, and the dog had been vaccinated against rabies and is fine. The Health Department reminds all county residents to avoid contact with wild animals or animals they do not know. Residents should have their pets vaccinated, and watch for unusual behavior.

“Well-intentioned efforts by individuals sometime can result in unnecessary exposure to pathogens like the rabies virus,” said Health Department Director, Dr. Karen Hacker. “We strongly advise Sewickley residents to stay away from wild or stray animals, especially in the area where the rabid raccoon was found, and if animals appear to be acting strange or become threatening, call your local animal control service, the police or the Pennsylvania Game Commission.”

Any individual who is bitten, scratched or otherwise exposed to saliva from a stray or any other animal, should immediately cleanse the contact area with soap and water, seek emergency medical treatment and call the Allegheny County Health Department, 412-687-ACHD (2243), to report the incident.

Rabies is a virus transmitted by an animal bite or scratch. It is almost always fatal when exposures are left untreated. The rabies vaccine is highly effective when given promptly after an exposure, but is still a major expense and inconvenience that can be avoided. The best prevention is to avoid stray animals, wild animals or those acting strangely as they can be potentially rabid.

So far this year, a total of 20 rabid animals have been reported in Allegheny County: four (4) raccoons, eleven (11) bats, two (2) cats, one (1) coyote and two (2) skunks.

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