



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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December 27, 2017

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Rabies Confirmed in Wilmerding Cat; Health Department Issues Precautions

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) has confirmed a cat that was brought to one of its facilities has tested positive for rabies. The cat was discovered in the 400 block of Orient Avenue in Wilmerding.

An adult female was scratched by the rabid cat, and she has been advised to seek medical treatment. The cat also had exposure to other animals in the vicinity. Residents in that area who have had exposure to a feral cat, or if their pet has had exposure, should contact ACHD immediately.

“We strongly urge all residents to avoid any kind of contact with a wild or stray animal, particularly those in Wilmerding, where the rabid cat was found,” said ACHD Director, Dr. Karen Hacker. “If any animal appears to be acting strange or becomes threatening, residents should notify their local animal control service, the police or the Pennsylvania Game Commission immediately.”

Rabies is a virus transmitted by an animal bite or scratch, and exposures due to a bite or scratch are almost always fatal when left untreated. In this specific case, the animal was not foaming at the mouth, as is typically perceived as a sign of rabies, but was instead lethargic and appears as sickly, weak and hissing when approached. All county residents should always avoid stray animals and wildlife, even if they appear healthy, to avoid exposure to rabies. Residents should also have their pets vaccinated, and watch for unusual behavior.

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, 412-687-2243, to report the incident.

So far in 2017, a total of 16 rabid animals have been reported in Allegheny County: seven (7) raccoons, five (5) bats, three (3) cats and one (1) skunk.

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