

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For More Information Contact

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THREE ANIMALS TESTED POSITIVE AND ONE ANIMAL PRESUMED POSITIVE FOR RABIES IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY

(Petersburg, Va.)-The Prince George Health Department received confirmation for three animals that tested positive for rabies in this calendar year- a cat, skunk and fox. A fourth animal, a fox exhibiting behaviors associated with rabies symptoms, was not available for testing and was presumed rabid. Both foxes were encountered in the Merchants Hope and Ruffin Road areas of the County. The cat was found in the Disputanta area of Prince George, and the skunk was found near Route 10 towards Surry County. Animal owners are advised to confirm that all vaccinations, especially rabies, are current.

“The health department strives to keep Prince George communities healthy and safe. Please notify the health department or animal control immediately if you see a suspicious animal,” emphasized Crater District Health Departments Director Alton Hart, Jr., MD, MPH.

“Rabies is a serious and life-threatening disease. Prince George Health Department works to help keep residents safe. Please protect yourself and your community by notifying the health department or local animal control if you observe any animals displaying abnormal behavior,” shared Crater District Health Departments Environmental Health Manager Tim Jones.

The Health Department strongly advises that people take the following steps to prevent families and pets from being exposed to rabies:

- Vaccinate all cats, dogs and ferrets against rabies and keep them up to date.
- Avoid contact with wild animals or stray cats and dogs.
- Do not feed wild animals or stray cats and dogs.
- Report stray animals to your local animal control agency.
- Eliminate outdoor food sources around the home.
- Keep pets confined to your property or walk them on a leash.

Rabies is a preventable viral disease found in mammals such as bats, raccoons and foxes. It is spread through contact with the saliva of a rabid (infected) animal, most often through a bite or scratch. Early symptoms include fever, headache and general weakness or discomfort. Rabies affects the brain and ultimately leads to death. It can be prevented with vaccination, but once symptoms begin, there is no cure. If your pet needs to be vaccinated for rabies, please contact your local veterinarian.

To report a stray and/or suspicious animal, please contact Prince George County Animal Control Department at 804-991-3200. For more information about rabies or how to protect your family, call 804-863-1652. Also, you can visit Crater Health District online at craterhd.net, or on Facebook [@CRATERHD](https://www.facebook.com/CRATERHD) and Twitter [@CraterHD](https://twitter.com/CraterHD).

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