

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RABIES ALERT ISSUED FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY



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Sanford, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Seminole County (DOH-Seminole) is issuing a rabies alert for neighborhoods in Geneva surrounding Harts Lake and Lake Geneva. The alert is in response to a raccoon which tested positive for rabies in that area. Residents and visitors in the area bordered to the north by Maxwell Court, on the east by Winona Drive, on the south by Cemetery Road, and on the west by Bennett Trail should avoid contact with raccoons and other wildlife. If you, a family member or someone you know thinks that they were bitten or scratched by a raccoon, contact Seminole County Animal Services at (407) 665-5201 or the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County at (407) 665-3243.

Residents and visitors in Seminole County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population, and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. Alerts are designed to increase public awareness. Please be aware that rabies activities can also occur outside the alert area. This rabies alert is for 60 days.

An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies. Contact to animals at risk for rabies including feral cats, stray dogs and all wildlife particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes should be avoided.

The following advice is issued:

- All pets should have current rabies immunizations.
- Secure outside garbage in covered containers to avoid attracting wild animals.
- Do not leave pet food outside. This also attracts other animals.
- Avoid contact with all wildlife, especially feral cats, raccoons, bats, and foxes.
- If bitten or scratched by a suspected rabid animal, wash the wound immediately with soap and water, seek medical attention, and promptly report the incident to Seminole County Animal Services.
- Rabies is preventable when treatment is provided in a timely manner.

For general questions pertaining to animals, contact Seminole County Animal Services. For information related to non-domestic animals, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Northeast Region Office at (352) 732-1225.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system that can cause paralysis and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The virus is spread through saliva, and humans may become infected

through a bite wound, scratch or exposure of a fresh cut or mucous membranes (eyes, nose or mouth) to saliva of a rabid animal. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

For more information on rabies, visit: DOH website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html> or the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies. To view a Rabies Prevention Tips educational video please visit <https://youtu.be/t39LoYhJg48> .

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