



MUNICIPAL BUILDING
BOROUGH OF RUTHERFORD

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

FERAL CAT TESTS POSITIVE FOR RABIES

The Rutherford Board of Health has reported that a feral cat has tested positive for the deadly rabies virus on Friday, December 4, 2020. The cat in question was living outdoors in the area of East Passaic Avenue and The Terrace.

Residents should be advised of the following:

. Children and adults should avoid contact with any dog or cat at large, where the ownership of the animal is uncertain. One of the basic principals of rabies control is to not permit dogs and cats to roam free.

. People should stay away from wildlife, particularly wildlife that is acting sick, aggressive, unusually friendly to people or paralyzed. Abnormally acting wildlife or other animals should be immediately reported to the Rutherford Police Department at 201-939-6000.

. All cats and dogs should be kept currently vaccinated against rabies. Pet owners should monitor the expiration dates of their pet's rabies vaccinations and revaccinate their animals prior to expiration. Dogs and cats are required to be licensed through the police department records bureau (201-460-3045).

. If a person is bitten by any animal, they should receive medical attention and be evaluated for a rabies exposure. If possible, the biting animal should be captured, contained, and ownership information gathered so the animal can be evaluated. Animal bites are required to be reported to the local health department.

. Persons who find bats in their homes should contact the Rutherford Police Department immediately for guidance. If someone was bitten or had direct contact with a bat it should be captured and contained if possible. Bat-proofing to prevent bats from entering the living space of residences should be undertaken to prevent future exposures.

The state health department has reported that cats have accounted for 91% of the domestic animal cases in New Jersey since 1989. For the last 5 years, there have been an average of 19 cats infected with rabies annually. Since 1989, there have been 542 rabid cats in the state, compared to 8 rabid dogs, one of which was imported from Iraq.

Residents with questions can reach out to the Rutherford Health Department weekdays at 201-460-3020.