



COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

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For Immediate Release:

Montgomery County Health Department Announces Pottstown Rabies Clinic

September 7, 2011 (Norristown, PA) The Montgomery County Health Department will be conducting our final 2011 **Low Cost Rabies Immunization Clinic** Saturday, September 24, 2011 in Pottstown.

- **The Pottstown Rabies Clinic location, date and time is:**

LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Pottstown Roller Mills 625 Industrial Highway Pottstown	9/24	9 AM – 11 AM

- **WHEN YOU COME TO THE CLINIC, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL ANIMALS MUST BE LEASHED OR IN AN APPROVED CARRIER.**
- **THE VACCINATION COST IS \$10.00 PER SHOT.**
- In 2010, 1,149 cats and dogs were vaccinated at five Rabies Clinic Sites in Montgomery County:

CLINIC SITE	2010
Abington Recycling Center	216
Collegeville	225
Lower Salford Township	203
Burnside Oakland Park	318
Pottstown Borough	187
Total	1,149

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POTTSTOWN HEALTH CENTER

364 King Street

Pottstown, PA 19464

Phone: (610) 970-5040 Fax: (610) 970-5048

EASTERN COURT HOUSE ANNEX

102 York Road, Suite 401

Willow Grove, PA 19090

Phone: (215) 784-5415 Fax: (215) 784-5524

The Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) would like to take this opportunity to discuss rabies and rabies vaccination.

During the fall residents will be outside with their pets or walking/hiking on trails and in parks. These activities could place county residents at a higher risk of exposure to wild animals and/or stray domestic animals.

- **What is Rabies?**

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system. It can affect all mammals, including man. Rabies is a fatal disease once symptoms appear.

- **How is Rabies Spread?**

Rabies is spread most often through the bite of a rabid animal. It can also be spread through a scratch from a rabid animal that breaks the skin or through exposure of an open wound or mucous membrane (eye, nose or mouth) to saliva from a rabid animal. In Montgomery County rabies has been found in raccoons, bats, skunks, foxes, cats, and dogs.

- **All cats and dogs three months of age and older must be vaccinated against rabies. Pennsylvania State Law and the Montgomery County Public Health Code require this.**

Vaccinating domestic animals is an important way to prevent rabies transmission from wildlife animal reservoirs to the human population.

- **Many Montgomery County residents are not vaccinating their cats or dogs.**

When reviewing the 1,478 animal bites in Montgomery County reported to the Health Department in 2010, 1,021 were animal-to-human and 161 were animal-to-animal; and an additional 296 were domestic animals with a wound of unknown origin that was presumed to be caused by a suspected rabid animal. Of the domestic animals involved in human biting incidents whose rabies vaccination status was known, 38% of cats and 11% of dogs were either unvaccinated or not up-to-date on their rabies vaccinations.

- **A dog or cat that is not current on its rabies vaccinations and has a wound of unknown origin must be quarantined for a period of six (6) months. This quarantine is completed in-home, but is monitored by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.**

In 2010, 296 pets were exposed to suspected rabid animals and were quarantined.

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Animal rabies remains a problem. The number of animal rabies cases reported to the Health Department since 1996 are as follows:

YEAR	ANIMAL RABIES CAESS INVOLVING HUMAN OR DOMESTIC ANIMAL
1996	5 (4 raccoons; 1 bat)
1997	12 (7 raccoons; 1 skunk; 4 cats)
1998	10 (6 raccoons; 1 skunk; 2 bats; 1 cat)
1999	7 (1 raccoons; 2 skunk; 3 bats; 1 cats)
2000	14 (6 raccoons; 2 skunks; 2 bats; 1 cat; 1 dog; 1 groundhog; 1 fox)
2001	21 (8 raccoons; 7 skunks; 2 bats; 2 cats; 1 groundhog; 1 beaver)
2002	18 (9 raccoons; 6 skunks; 2 bats; 1 groundhog)
2003	8 (7 raccoons; 1 bat)
2004	19 (12 raccoons; 3 skunks; 2 bats; 2 cats)
2005	17 (8 raccoons; 5 skunks; 2 bats; 2 cats)
2006	10 (7 raccoons, 2 cats, 1 bat)
2007	11 (4 bats, 3 skunks, 2 raccoons, 1 groundhog, 1 steer)
2008	21 (8 skunks, 6 raccoons, 5 bats, 2 cats)
2009	14 (10 raccoons, 2 skunks, 1 fox, 1 bat)
2010	10 (5 raccoons, 3 skunks, 1bat, 1 cat)

Currently in 2011, Montgomery County rabies cases reported to date are as follows: Two positive animal rabies cases in Montgomery County this year, **2 Raccoons:** Lower Merion Township (1) and Abington Township (1).

The recommended precautions to prevent animal bites and possible rabies risk are:

- Do not feed, befriend, handle, or try to make pets of wild animals or stray domestic animals.
- Vaccinate domestic dogs, cats and selected livestock according to your veterinarian’s recommendations.
- Obey animal control ordinances, particularly not allowing domestic animals to run at large.
- If bitten by a wild or domestic animal, immediately wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention from your doctor or hospital emergency room.
- After receiving appropriate medical care, contact the Health Department we can investigate whether post-exposure rabies injections are required and provide the appropriate recommendation to the physician.

For more information about MCHD’s Animal Bite and Rabies Surveillance Program, please contact the Division of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, at (610) 278-5117.

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