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DOH-MARION ISSUES RABIES ALERT AFTER CAT IN ZUBER-AREA TESTS POSITIVE



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OCALA, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health in Marion County has issued a rabies alert after a cat in the Zuber area tested positive for rabies. People who live or work in the Zuber area, particularly those who live south of West Highway 326, west of Northwest 44th Avenue, north of Northwest 53rd Street and east of Northwest Highway 225A, should maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in the area.

An animal with rabies could infect other animals that have not received a rabies vaccination. Domestic animals are at risk if they are not vaccinated; rabies is always a danger in wild animal populations.

If you have been bitten or scratched by a wild or domestic animal, seek medical attention and report the injury to your county health department. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek immediate veterinary assistance for the animal, and contact your county's Animal Services department.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to humans and warm-blooded animals. 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.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions to prevent exposure to rabies:

- Avoid all contact with wildlife, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Never handle unfamiliar animals (wild or domestic), even if they appear friendly.
- Do not feed or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or trash.
- Keep rabies vaccinations current for all pets.
- Keep pets under direct supervision so they do not come into contact with wild animals.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas where they might encounter people and pets.

For more information on rabies, visit www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies.

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