

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 25, 2023**

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN PALM BEACH COUNTY  
IDENTIFIES OTTER WITH RABIES**



**Contact:**

Communications Office  
[Chd50ContactUs@flhealth.gov](mailto:Chd50ContactUs@flhealth.gov)  
561-671-4014

**Palm Beach County, FL-** The Florida Department of Health Laboratory has confirmed that an otter in Palm Beach County has tested positive for rabies.

Animal Care & Control confirmed on September 23rd that a rabid otter bit a dog and then a person in the 900 Block of Marlin Drive in Jupiter, FL 33458. The otter was picked up by Animal Care and Control and then sent for rabies testing.

Residents in the area are cautioned to avoid contact with any wildlife including feral / community cats and report suspicious animals to Animal Care and Control.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans if not treated. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies-specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment must be started as soon as possible after the exposure to protect an exposed person from the disease. The following advice is issued:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If you or your pet are bitten by a wild animal, seek medical or veterinary assistance immediately and contact Animal Care & Control at **561-233-1215**.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- Spay or neuter your pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets that may not be properly cared for or regularly vaccinated.
- Do not handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas where they might come in contact with people and pets.

For further information on rabies, go to the Florida Department of Health website:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html> or contact the Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County at 561-840-4500 and ask to be transferred to the Epidemiology Section. Animals exhibiting signs of sickness and aggressive behavior should be reported to Animal Control at **561-233-1200, extension 0**.

## **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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