

Immediate Release

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HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE RABIES ALERT

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Port Orange, Fla – The Florida Department of Health in Volusia County issued a rabies alert for the South-Eastern portions of Port Orange. This is in response to a cat that tested positive for rabies August 8, 2022 .

All residents and visitors in Volusia County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Volusia County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not get a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

The recent rabies alert is for 60 days. The center of the rabies alert is between Harbor Rd and N. Dixie Freeway in Port Orange, and includes the following boundaries

- Easter boundary, Halifax River water body
- Northern Boundary, Rose Bay water body
- Southern Boundary, Spruce Creek water body
- Western Boundary, Florida East Coast Railroad Tracks

An animal with rabies could infect other wild or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. 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:

- 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 your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Volusia County Sheriff's office non-emergency line at 386-248-1777
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- **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.
- Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Volusia County at 386-274-0634.

For further information on rabies, go to <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html> or call the Florida Department of Health in Volusia County at 386-274-0634, or Volusia County Sheriff's Office non-emergency line at 386-248-1777.

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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