

RABID RACCOON FOUND IN MANSFIELD TOWNSHIP

BURLCO Health Department Cautions Residents

The Burlington County Health Department is advising residents that a raccoon found in Mansfield Township has tested positive for rabies. The raccoon was in the vicinity of Georgetown Road. The Health Department is concerned that other wild and stray animals may have come into contact with this raccoon.

The Burlington County Health Department warns homeowners who allow their pets to roam outside unattended to check the status of their pets' last rabies shot. If it has been longer than one year, a booster shot should be given.

County Health Officer Holly Cucuzzella said, "Rabies is transmitted from infected mammals to humans usually through a bite, but scratches and saliva contact with broken skin or mucous membranes are also possible routes. Any person who had direct contact with a raccoon may have been exposed to rabies and should contact their doctor as soon as possible."

Rabies is a viral disease that attacks the nervous system and is fatal in humans without prompt treatment. The disease is spread when a rabid animal's saliva contacts another animal or human through wounds in the skin, typically a bite.

Treatment should begin as soon as possible after a suspected exposure to rabies. Current vaccinations are relatively painless and given as close to the injured area as possible.

If bitten, scratched or licked by a wild animal:

- Immediately wash the wounds with plenty of soap and water
- Get prompt medical attention
- Get a description of the animal
- Report the bite to your local health department

For more information on rabies, please visit, <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>.