



Joint media release from Casper-Natrona County Public Health and the City of Casper's Metro Animal Services

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Rabies detected in bats within Natrona County

Casper-Natrona County Health Department has been notified that there has been an increase in the number of positive animal rabies reports this summer. While rabies is rare and typically numbers are low, Scott Schell with Casper Metro Animal Services has reported 3 positive tests in bats since June 7, 2018. This is a significant increase from past years.

These steps should be taken to minimize exposure to rabies:

- Vaccinate dogs, cats, ferrets, horses and other selected livestock for rabies and keep vaccinations current.
- Report any unusual animal behavior to Animal Control at Casper's non-emergency number (307-235-8278).
 - * Unusual animal behaviors include but are not limited to:
 - * bats active during daylight hours,
 - * excessive drooling or foaming at the mouth,
 - * aggressive behaviors,
- Avoid contact with stray and wild animals.
- Keep pets under supervision in a yard or on a leash to minimize contact with wild animals.
- Teach children to never approach unfamiliar dogs, cats or wildlife, even if they appear friendly.
- Treat animal bites with soap and water and contact a medical professional immediately.
- People waking to find a bat in their room or a child's room should contact a medical professional immediately as bats have such small teeth even unknown or minor contact with bats has led to rabies infection.

Dr. Karl Musgrave, state public health veterinarian with the Wyoming Department of Health, reminds people about the importance of animal vaccinations. "This can keep pets, horses and livestock from getting rabies, and help protect pet owners should pets be bitten by a rabid wild animal,". Musgrave said it is also important to report animal bites to local animal control officials and to follow recommended quarantine guidelines.

There is no known cure for rabies, however post exposure prophylaxis (vaccinations) are available. If you have been bitten by an animal you feel may have rabies, contact your healthcare provider. If you feel you have been exposed to rabies contact Leah Smith with the Casper-Natrona County Health Department at (307) 577-9745. For more information see <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>