

## REPORT ALL BITES

All animal bites are to be reported to Anne Arundel County Police at 410-222-8610 or Annapolis City Police at 410-268-9000. All reports are turned over to Animal Control for investigation. If the animal is confined, dead or still in the area, Animal Control will respond as soon as possible. If the owner is known, the officer will contact them for rabies vaccination verification and to give quarantine instructions.

If the owner is unknown, the officer will ask for certain information to assist in his/her investigation such as breed, and description, where the animal was last seen, and what direction the animal was going. It is important to gather as much information as possible to help the officer locate the animal, but it is also important to prevent further contact, bites or injury. Remember, educate your family on rabies prevention, vaccinate your pets and contact Animal Control with any questions or concerns about rabies in your neighborhood.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Maryland State law requires all dogs, cats and ferrets four months of age and older to be vaccinated against rabies. The length of vaccine effectiveness varies depending on the vaccine used, the species and the age of the animal. Proof in form of an up-to-date rabies certificate is a prerequisite for the purchase of an Anne Arundel County Animal License.

Due to the significant increase in positive rabies cases experienced in Anne Arundel County, Animal Control is doing its part to help protect all Anne Arundel County pets from the deadly rabies virus. Animal Control now holds weekly low cost rabies clinics. Keep your pet continuously vaccinated against rabies. It's the *LAW!*

Pets under three months of age, pregnant and nursing mothers, pets currently under quarantine, and those sick/injured should be seen by a veterinarian before being vaccinated.



## ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

(411 Maxwell Frye Road, Millersville, Maryland 21108)

### WEEKLY RABIES CLINICS

VACCINATION COST  
\$5.00

PLEASE, DO YOUR PART  
VACCINATE YOUR PET!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL  
410-222-8900

ALL DOGS ON LEASHES/ALL CATS IN  
CARRIERS

Protect your family

Protect your pets

Protect your community.....

Be a Responsible Pet Owner.

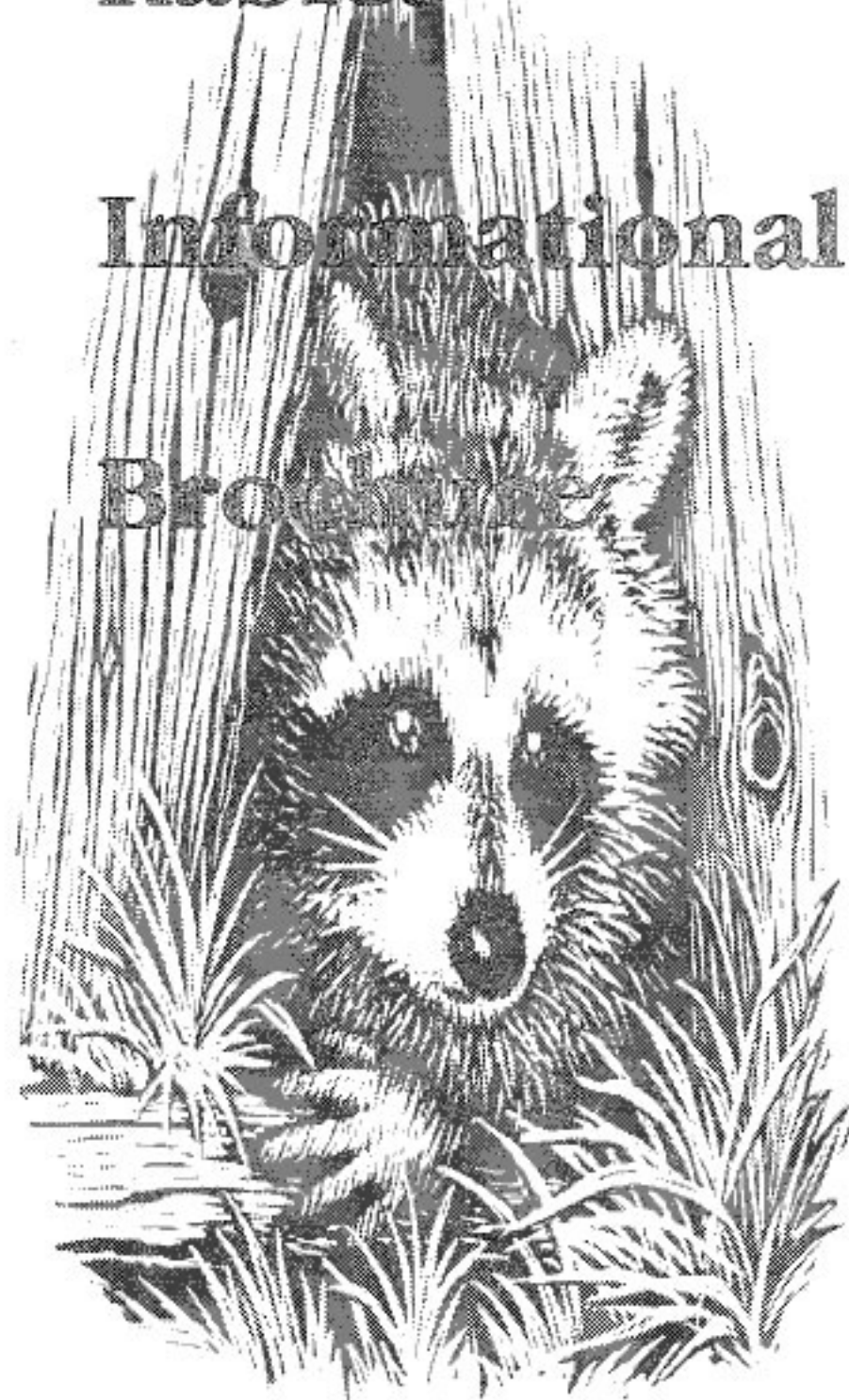
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ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY  
ANIMAL CONTROL  
411 Maxwell Frye Road  
Millersville, Maryland 21108  
410-222-8900

# Rabies

## Informational

## Brochure



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Millersville, Maryland 21108  
410-222-8900

## RABIES

The number of rabies cases has been on the rise in Anne Arundel County for the last several years and has caused great concern among Animal Control and the Department of Health. It is essential that the public understand the seriousness of this problem and be informed as to how to protect their families and pets from this deadly disease.

Rabies is caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system of mammals. Pets, livestock, wildlife and humans may contract the disease. The rabies virus lives in the saliva of the rabid animal. Once an animal is infected, the rabies virus travels from the bite site via the nerves to the spinal cord and brain. The disease causes convulsions, paralysis and death. Once the symptoms of rabies appear, death is almost certain. Treatment is effective if given soon after the bite or exposure to a rabid animal.

Rabies is most commonly spread through bites from infected animals. The disease can also be spread by passing the virus through open wounds, scratches and membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth.

Once an animal has been infected with rabies, it usually requires several weeks to several months before signs of the disease appear. Near the end of this incubation period, the virus may be present in the saliva, and the animal can spread rabies.

In this area, rabies is most often seen in raccoons, foxes, skunks and bats. Domestic animals such as dogs, cats, ferrets and farm animals are also at risk, especially if they are not vaccinated against rabies and allowed to roam at will and come into contact with wild and stray animals.

A marked change in normal behavior is the most consistent sign of rabies. Two common forms are dumb rabies and furious rabies. In furious rabies the animal is excitable, irritable and aggressive. It tends to attack and bite other animals and people and loses all fear of natural enemies. In dumb rabies, the animal may appear shy, timid, calm, docile and unusually approachable.

Other signs to look for in animals are:

- nocturnal animals active and visible during the day
- animals having difficulty walking or seemingly disoriented
- weakness, paralysis
- inability to eat or drink
- drooling, foaming at the mouth
- convulsions

## Protect Your Family and Pets

### IMMUNIZE PETS

Be sure your dogs, cats and ferrets are vaccinated against rabies and keep your pet's vaccinations up to date at all times. Maryland law as well as Anne Arundel County law requires that all cats, dogs and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies. For animals under 12 months of age, the vaccination is good for one year. Over 12 months of age and dependent on the vaccine, the vaccination is good for three years, as long as the first shot was given a year before.

### OBSERVE THE LEASH LAW

Do not allow your pets to roam at large. Confine your pets to your home or yard and walk them on a leash. Not only is this Anne Arundel County law, but it is also less likely your animal will be exposed to rabies while confined to its property or under the direct control of its owner.

### PETS THAT CONTACT WILD OR STRAY ANIMALS SHOULD NOT BE HANDLED BY HUMANS FOR AT LEAST 2 HOURS

Avoid contact with wild animals. Do not feed, water or handle these animals. If they are injured or sick, call Animal Control for assistance, but do not handle them. Also, never try to make pets out of wild animals. Most wild animals, even if they appear friendly, will attack if threatened or cornered. If your pet gets into a fight with a wild or stray animal, **DO NOT touch, handle or hold** your pet for several hours following the fight. If it is necessary to examine your pet for an injury, **protect yourself by wearing gloves and a long sleeve jacket or shirt. Do not let your pet lick you.** These precautions will keep you from contacting any saliva from the wild or stray animal that may be on your pet and potentially exposing yourself to the rabies virus.

### DO NOT FEED WILD LIFE

Discourage wild animals from coming into your yard or house. Do not leave trash or garbage lying around exposed, but keep all trash in cans with tightly secured lids. Do not feed pets outside or store pet food outside unless well secured. Keep doors, windows, porches, basements, attics chimneys and outbuildings secured against animal access. Cap chimneys; seal off attic openings; fix holes in screens.

### AVOID STRAYS OR WILD ANIMALS

Teach children never to approach wild animals or strunge domestic animals. There is no way to know if a stray animal has been vaccinated against rabies.

## Animal Bites

If your pet has been bitten by a wild or stray animal, contact your veterinarian as well as Animal Control. Use gloves while handling your pet for two hours after the wild or stray animal contact. Your pet may need a rabies booster shot.

If you or your family are bitten by a wild or stray animal or a pet, thoroughly wash the wound with warm soapy water, then dry the wound and apply antiseptic.

### SEEK MEDICAL CARE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER CONTACT

It is important to get prompt medical attention. Either contact your family physician or go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital. Your physician may consult with Animal Control and the Health Department (410-222-7258) to determine whether post-exposure rabies shots are needed. The series of shots (five vaccinations over 28 days) plus the immune globulin cause little discomfort.

### CAPTURE OR OBSERVE UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

If the animal is wild, confine the animal if it can be done safely and without threat of further injury. Call Animal Control immediately. If you cannot confine the animal, try to have someone keep it in sight until it can be trapped or confined. If the animal dies, try to keep other animals and humans away from the animal and prevent any damage to the head. The animal's brain tissue may be needed to test for rabies.

### IDENTIFY OWNER - GET THEIR INFORMATION IN WRITING

If the animal is a pet, get the name, address and phone number of the owner and the pet's veterinarian as well as proof of a current rabies vaccination. If the owner cannot provide proof of the vaccination, try to obtain information as to where and when the last vaccination was given so that verification can be made through the veterinarian. If the owner is unknown, have someone follow the animal from a safe distance to see if it returns home and an owner can be located. Call Animal Control for assistance immediately.

### BAT BITES

Bat bites should be reported promptly. Even if you are not sure if a bite has taken place (example: you are sleeping and awaken to find a bat in the room or you find a bat in a room with an unattended child) treat the incident as if a bite occurred. If the bat can be confined without further contact, do so, then contact Animal Control immediately.