



WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Will County Health Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POST-EXPOSURE RABIES SHOTS ADVISED FOR JOLIET FAMILY

JOLIET – The Will County Health Department recommended that three Joliet residents begin post-exposure rabies prophylaxis August 28, after a live bat trapped in the family's home tested positive for rabies.

Will County Animal Control dispatched the bat to the Illinois Department of Public Health August 27. The animal was initially seen in the Oakland Avenue residence August 25, and was eventually captured live by Joliet Animal Control.

Post-exposure rabies treatments for all three people living in the home were strongly advised after learning that the bat was seen flying around the bedroom in which the residents (including a 10-month-old baby), had been sleeping. The incident marks Will County's fifth case of wildlife rabies for 2009, and the second confirmation involving potential human rabies exposures.

A 17-year-old male began receiving post-exposure rabies treatments after a bat trapped in a Naperville yard was confirmed rabid August 25. Across Illinois, approximately 600 people receive post-exposure rabies shots every year, and the annual national total is approximately 25,000.

"We continue to urge that all area residents avoid contact with bats and other warm-blooded wild animals," according to Lee Schild D.V.M., Will County Animal Control Administrator. "All potential exposures should be reported to the most appropriate animal control authority immediately. Animal control personnel take all potential human exposures very seriously, because they understand how dangerous rabies is."

Rabies is a fatal viral disease transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected warm-blooded animal. Bats have accounted for all 44 of the wildlife rabies cases reported in Will County since 1995.

Will County Animal Control is available 24 hours daily at 815-462-5633.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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