



September 19, 2014
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS RELEASE

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Public Health Alert: Confirmed Rabies Case in Craven County

NEW BERN, N.C. – The Craven County Health Department has issued a public health alert in Craven County after receiving notice today from the North Carolina State Lab that a dog has tested positive for rabies. The black and white pit bull type puppy approximately 10 weeks of age was reportedly found by a trash dumpster in the City of Havelock between the former Carolina Grill restaurant and the Havelock Post Office on Highway 70.

Any person bitten or exposed to potentially infectious saliva from this puppy from August 29, 2014 through September 18, 2014 should contact their healthcare provider or the Craven County Health Department at (252) 636-4920 for a rabies risk assessment. Additionally, if any other puppies matching this description are seen in the area near where the rabid puppy was located, please contact the Havelock Police Department at (252) 447-3212 or the Craven County Sheriff's Department to speak to the on call Animal Control Officer at (252) 633-2357.

Rabies is a fatal yet preventable disease if post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is administered within a short time after exposure. Rabies is transmitted by the bite of an infected animal or via contamination of open wounds or mucus membranes with potentially infectious material such as saliva. Rabies is not transmitted through petting an infected animal or through contact with blood, feces or urine.

Prevention of rabies is based on protection of susceptible animals and people and appropriate management of persons and animals exposed to rabies:

1. Vaccinate pets. In accordance with NC State Law all dogs, cats, and ferrets over four months of age must be kept currently vaccinated against rabies and must wear a rabies tag. Cats are the most commonly identified domestic animal with rabies.
2. Control measures for pets exposed to rabies. If pets are exposed to rabies they should receive a booster dose of rabies vaccine if they are currently vaccinated at the time of exposure. If pets are not currently vaccinated against rabies when exposed they will be euthanized or quarantined for six months in accordance with state law.
3. Control measures for persons exposed to rabies. Seek medical guidance from your health care provider or the Craven County Health Department if you believe you have been exposed to rabies.
4. Do not attempt to contact or touch stray animals; call Craven Pamlico Animal Services Center at (252) 637-4606.
5. Do not handle, feed or attract wild animals. Raccoon and other wildlife serve as the reservoir for rabies in North Carolina. Never bring wild animals into your home.
6. Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.

Rabies occurs throughout North Carolina. Anyone that sees an animal demonstrating unusual behavior should call Craven Pamlico Animal Services Center at (252) 637-4606. This is the first positive rabies confirmation in Craven County this year.

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