

Rabies Testing

If it is necessary to test an animal for rabies, the trapper or rehabilitator is to immediately call the Westchester County Department of Health to make the proper arrangements. It is the responsibility of the trapper or rehabilitator to have the animal euthanized and the specimen prepared. If this is not possible, call the Westchester County Department of Health for information and/or assistance. In addition, the trapper or rehabilitator must complete a rabies specimen history form and deliver the rabies specimen to the Westchester County Department of Health or a designated veterinarian as soon as possible after obtaining permission from the Westchester County Department of Health.

The Westchester County Department of Health will send the animal for testing and report results to all appropriate parties.

RVS Intake Forms

A RVS intake form is to be COMPLETED for EVERY call or incident regarding a RVS, regardless of whether or not you (the trapper or rehabilitator) handle the animal. If it is an emergency situation the trapper or rehabilitator is to immediately call the Westchester County Department of Health to report the incident.

Complaints

Complaints regarding trappers or rehabilitators will be forwarded to the DEC for follow-up. The Westchester County Department of Health will be informed of the outcome of the DEC's investigation of the complaint.

Failure to comply with any of the directives set forth by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Department of Health, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Westchester County Department of Health, and any

other applicable laws, rules and regulations regarding the handling of wildlife and the suppression of rabies in Westchester County will result in the immediate revocation of registration with the Westchester County Department of Health.

For more information 24 hours-a-day, call Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000

Westchester County Department of Health
Animal Vector Unit
Phone - (914) 864-7359
Fax - (914) 813-5160

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Rabies Protocol for Westchester County

Nuisance Wildlife Trapper and Rehabilitator



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Sherlita Amler, MD, Commissioner

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has established that rabies vector species (RVS), are raccoons, skunks and bats. Nuisance wildlife trappers and rehabilitators require special licensing to handle these animals in NYS.

The following are the requirements which have been established to protect the public health through the monitoring and suppression of rabies in Westchester County. All nuisance wildlife trappers and rehabilitators who would like to operate in Westchester County must conform to these mandates. The names and phone numbers of trappers and rehabilitators who are registered will be made available to the public upon request and on the internet.

Bats

At no time may bats be rehabilitated in Westchester County. All calls concerning bats require that a complete intake form be completed by the trapper and/or rehabilitator. The trapper and rehabilitator must immediately call the Westchester County Department of Health to report the incident. The Westchester County Department of Health may be contacted 24 hours-a-day at (914) 813-5000.

Any bat found in a dwelling or which may have had physical contact with a person or pet must be tested for rabies.

Maintaining Registration with the Westchester County Department of Health

A new and complete registration form will be required January 1st of every year. The trapper and rehabilitator must submit a new and complete registration form whenever there is a change from the original.

Reporting Rabies Exposure

It is the responsibility of the trapper and rehabilitator to immediately call the Westchester County Department of Health to report any human, domestic animal or pet expo-

sure to RVS or other suspected rabid animals. It is imperative that this be done immediately upon the trapper or rehabilitator's obtaining knowledge of an incident. Failure to do so will result in the immediate revocation of registration with Westchester County.

Pre-Exposure Vaccination

All persons registered to handle nuisance wildlife must be pre-immunized against rabies prior to handling wildlife. Pre-immunization is to be completed at least one month before any wildlife are handled. It is the responsibility of the trapper or rehabilitator's private physician to purchase and administer the rabies vaccine. If your physician is unable to obtain rabies vaccine, please contact the Westchester County Department of Health for assistance. The trapper or rehabilitator is responsible for maintaining an adequate rabies titer, either through rabies booster or serum testing every two years. The trapper or rehabilitator must provide the Westchester County Department of Health with updated booster or titer information.

Education Materials

Educational materials are to be provided to every person making an inquiry and/or obtaining service from the trapper or rehabilitator.

These materials will be provided upon request by the Westchester County Department of Health. The materials to be given to the public include the following: "Rabies in Wildlife", "Bat Rabies", and "Animal Bites".

DEC Nuisance Wildlife Trapper or Wildlife Rehabilitator License

A copy of the original DEC current license to handle and/or rehabilitate wildlife must be sent to the Westchester County Department of Health immediately upon receipt. This is required at the time of registration with Westchester County.

Renewal licenses must also be sent to the Westchester County Department of Health immediately upon receipt by the trapper or rehabilitator.

Trash Disposal

All materials used to handle RVS or other suspect rabid animals, i.e. gloves, paper towels, etc., must be disposed of properly. Proper disposal is defined as follows: all materials except sharp objects (ask cooperating veterinarian for assistance) must be collected in doubled heavy duty plastic bags. When the bags are full, the contents are to be doused with 10% chlorine solution, securely closed and discarded into the solid waste system. Materials from a known (laboratory positive) rabid animal are to be discarded as "red bag waste" through the trapper or rehabilitator's cooperating veterinarian.

Reporting Rabies Suspect Animals

The trapper or rehabilitator must immediately call the Westchester County Department of Health to report information regarding RVS or other rabies suspect animals that may pose or are posing a threat to the public. The trapper or rehabilitator must also immediately notify the local police department.

Carcass Disposal

All animal carcasses must be disposed of in a legal manner. Incineration is the preferred method of disposal. However, in Westchester animals may be buried 250 feet from water (well, stream, pond, etc.) and 3 feet deep. The trapper or rehabilitator is responsible for checking with the appropriate municipality to make sure there are no other restrictions.

Any animal that has been tested and found positive for rabies must be disposed of as "red bag waste". The trapper or rehabilitator should contact his or her veterinarian for assistance. The disposal or release of all RVS must be pre-approved by the Westchester County Department of Health. This is to ensure that only animals NOT requiring rabies testing are discarded or released.