

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RABIES ALERT: RABID STRAY CAT CAPTURED IN NORTHWEST YONKERS

The Westchester County Department of Health is alerting residents that an adult tabby stray cat that was caught on Shelley Avenue near Rockne Road in Yonkers last Thursday, July 11, was confirmed to be rabid today.

The cat scratched and bit a man in his front yard Thursday morning. It was captured by police shortly afterward. The man is receiving preventive rabies treatment.

Anyone who believes they, their children or their pet may have had contact with this cat is encouraged to call the Westchester County Department of Health at 914-813-5000 to assess the need for lifesaving rabies treatment. When administered early enough, before symptoms develop, the treatment is fully effective. Once symptoms occur, the disease is fatal.

The health department used robo-calls today to notify nearby residents.

“Stay alert and closely supervise children and pets when outside,” said Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD. “To protect yourself and your pets, make sure your pets’ rabies vaccines are up to date.”

Unusual behavior may be the first sign of rabies in an animal. A rabid animal may become either abnormally aggressive or unusually tame. It may lose fear of people and become excited and irritable, or, conversely appear particularly passive and lethargic. Staggering and frothing at the mouth are sometimes noted.

Residents who see a stray or wild animal acting strangely should avoid contact with the animal and alert local authorities to avoid possible exposure to rabies. Residents are also advised to keep their trash can lids securely sealed and avoid leaving pet food outdoors.

Any physical contact with a wild or unfamiliar animal should be reported to a health care provider. All animal bites or contacts with animals suspected of having rabies must be reported to the Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000, 24 hours a day.

Keeping pet rabies vaccinations up to date is also important for protection against rabies. New York State law requires dogs, cats and ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies and receive regular booster shots. For more information, go to www.westchestergov.com/health or call the RABIES INFOLINE at (914) 813-5010.

About Westchester County

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just under a million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of

beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting www.westchestergov.com

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