

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

**Date: September 10, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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RABIES ALERT: RABID RACCOON CAPTURED IN PORT CHESTER

(White Plains, NY) – The Westchester County Department of Health is alerting residents that a raccoon that was captured Sunday after it attacked three people in Port Chester has been confirmed to be rabid. The County Health Department used robo-calls today to notify nearby residents.

The first attack occurred on a woman at the corner of Halstead and Madison avenues shortly after 2:30 p.m. The raccoon then bit a man nearby on Halstead Avenue, before attacked another man in a nearby backyard on Willett Ave. That man's father killed the raccoon with a shovel and contacted Port Chester Police Department, who secured the raccoon for rabies testing.

All three people who were bitten are receiving preventive rabies treatment.

Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD, said: "Stay alert and closely supervise children and pets when outside. If you see an animal that is acting aggressively, stay away from it and contact local police immediately."

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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