

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Catherine Cioffi
Communications Director
Office - (914) 995-2932
Cell- (914) 954 -5579
CCioffi@westchestergov.com

RABIES ALERT

Westchester County Health Department Urgently Seeks Individuals Who Brought Rabid Cat to Yonkers Animal Hospital

(White Plains, NY) – The Westchester County Department of Health is issuing an urgent public notification after a sick and injured black cat brought to the Yonkers Animal Hospital, located at 526 Saw Mill River Road, on Thursday, December 12, tested positive for rabies.

The Health Department is seeking to identify and speak with the man and woman who dropped off the cat but did not leave their names or contact information. Health officials need to determine whether these individuals were exposed to the rabies virus, which is fatal if untreated.

If you are one of these individuals or had any contact with the cat, which appeared to be less than a year old and had likely been struck by a vehicle, please call the Westchester County Department of Health immediately at (914) 813-5000. This line is available 24/7.

As can be seen in the photos attached, when the cat was dropped off, the man was wearing an orange camouflage jacket and the woman carried the cat in a beige tote bag and wore a black jacket and a black hat with a pom-pom.

Health Commissioner Dr. Sherlita Amler said: “Rabies is fatal, but it is also 100 percent preventable with post-exposure treatment. To avoid rabies, steer clear of wild animals and strays. If you see an injured or sick animal, call police. Teach your children to not to approach or handle animals they don’t know, even if they appear young injured or friendly, and to tell you right away if they are bitten or scratched by any animal. It is also important to bat proof your home and keep your pets’ rabies vaccinations up to date. Discourage wild animals from visiting your yard by securely covering trash cans and keeping pet food and water indoors.”

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 appear particularly passive and lethargic. Staggering and frothing at the mouth are sometimes noted. 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 County Health Department.

For more information, go to www.westchestergov.com/health or call the RABIES INFOLINE at (914) 813-5010.

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