

GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COYOTE CAPTURED IN THORNWOOD TESTED POSITIVE FOR RABIES

(White Plains, NY) - The coyote that lunged at and bit a 5-year-old girl at Carroll Park in Thornwood Sunday evening has tested positive for rabies.

The coyote was captured by an off-duty Irvington police officer, and was shot by a Mount Pleasant police officer after it bit the girl on the left forearm at the playground. Everyone who came into contact with the animal, or its saliva, is being evaluated to determine the need for preventive rabies treatment.

“If a coyote approaches, make noise and try to avoid it,” said Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD. “If it appears aggressive or lethargic, it could have rabies, so contact local police. Avoid contact with strays and other wildlife.”

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 immediately reported to a health care provider to evaluate the need for preventive rabies treatment. If left untreated, rabies is fatal.

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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