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News Release

RABIES ADVISORY ISSUED BY HEALTH OFFICIALS

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL - The St. Johns County Health Department has issued a Rabies Advisory for the area near Sevilla Street in St. Augustine, in St. Johns County. Health officials are urging residents to avoid all contact with high risk stray and wild animals including raccoons, foxes, skunks and bats.

Rabies is a viral disease affecting the central nervous system that usually results in death. Rabies can be prevented but not cured. All warm-blooded animals, including humans, are able to contract rabies. Rabies is almost always contracted by exposure to a rabid animal. Exposure can come through a bite, scratches or saliva from the animal coming in contact with broken skin of another animal or a human.

To avoid the risk of exposure to rabid animals, the St. Johns County Health Department recommends that the following guidelines be followed:

- Do not feed wild or stray animals
- Pet food should not be left outside
- Secure trash receptacles to avoid attracting wild or stray animals
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, either wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home
- Do not try to nurse sick animals to health

Persons who have had physical contact with a suspicious animal should do the following:

- Wash the wound right away with soap and water to decrease the chances of infection
- Seek medical attention immediately for post-exposure care and vaccine
- Get a description of the animal that bit or scratched you

The health department is recommending residents report any suspicious behavior in wild animals or stray animals to the St. Johns County Animal Control office at (904) 209-0746.

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***Our Mission:** Promote, protect and improve the health of all people in Florida.*

***Our Vision:** A healthier future for the people of Florida.*

***Our Values:** - Integrity; Commitment to Service; Respect; Excellence; Accountability; Teamwork; Empowerment –*



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