



Public Health
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Mahoning County
District Board of Health

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE	CONTACT: Patricia Sweeney (330) 270 -2855 ext. 144
	DATE: September 3, 2013

ANNUAL RACCOON ORAL RABIES VACCINATION (ORV)
BAITING BEGINS IN MAHONING COUNTY
SEPTEMBER 4-6, 2013

To prevent the spread of raccoon-rabies variant (RRV), the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is currently conducting their annual raccoon-rabies baiting operation. Baiting will take place across the eastern part of Ohio and the full operation will run through September 20, 2013. Ground baiting in Mahoning County will take place beginning September 4, 2013 and will run through September 6, 2013.

So far in 2013, five cases of RRV have been confirmed, including four raccoons in Mahoning County and one cat in Trumbull County.

The baiting program is a partnership among ODH, Mahoning County District Board of Health, Youngstown City Health District, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Wildlife Services programs.

Baits will be distributed by fixed-wing aircraft, helicopter, and vehicles staffed by USDA and staff from the local health departments. Residents should be aware of low-flying aircraft and should keep children and pets away from the baits. Dogs in particular are attracted to the baits and will occasionally eat them. The baits are not harmful to pets. Please keep the following information in mind:

- Know what the baits look like. The coated sachet, which will be distributed by aircraft, is about the size of a ketchup packet. It is white and rolled in a brown fishmeal glaze. In urban areas, where baits will be distributed by vehicle, the sachet will be inside a hard, brown fishmeal block, about 2-x-2-inch square. [Photos of the baits can be found on our website.](#)
- Instruct children to leave the bait alone.
- Once your area is baited, keep dogs and cats inside or on leashes for up to five days. Most baits disappear within 24 hours; however, it is important that raccoons have every opportunity to eat them.

50 Westchester Drive
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- Do not attempt to take bait away from your pet; you may be bitten.
- Anyone handling baits should wear gloves. If baits are found in areas frequented by pets or children, toss them into deeper cover. Damaged baits can be disposed of in the trash.
- If a person is exposed to the vaccine (liquid), thoroughly wash any areas of the skin that were exposed to the vaccine with soap and water.
- If someone has been exposed to the vaccine or has questions about the baiting, call the toll-free phone number that is printed on the bait, call ODH at 614-752-1029, or call the Mahoning County District Board of Health at 330-270-2855 option #2.

Rabies is a viral disease that affects animals and people. It is almost always fatal. Rabies baiting operations are intended to create an immune barrier along Ohio's state lines to prevent the spread of RRV into the rest of the state.

In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code (ORC) 1501:31-15-03, it is illegal to live trap, move and release raccoons. Anyone dealing with a nuisance raccoon cannot relocate the animal. There are only two legal options for nuisance raccoons: euthanize or release on the same property where they were live trapped. People who are relocating nuisance raccoons may be contributing to rabies crossing the barrier.

The rabies virus is found in the saliva of affected animals, most often raccoons, skunks and bats, and is spread when saliva from an infected animal gets into a wound or mucous membrane (such as the eye or mouth). Animal bites are the most common route of exposure. Bats, raccoons, and skunks pose the greatest risk of rabies in Ohio. To protect your family against this still-deadly disease:

- Avoid contact with wild animals and animals you do not know.
- Vaccinate your pets against rabies and keep them current on their shots.
- If bitten, call your doctor. If your pet has contact with a wild animal, call your veterinarian.
- Rabies exposures should also be reported to your local health department.

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