



Public Health
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**Mahoning County
District Board of Health**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE	CONTACT: Patricia Sweeney, JD, MPH, RN psweeney@mahoninghealth.org (330) 270-2855 ext. 144
	DATE: September 5, 2013 (Immediate Release)

Bat Identified As Positive for Rabies in Mahoning County

An Ohio Department of Health laboratory report has confirmed that a bat found in the vicinity of James Street, Poland Township, Mahoning County has tested positive for the rabies virus. This is considered an exposure due to human handling of the bat.

This positive test result brings the total 2013 rabies cases in Mahoning County to five. Please see the summary table below:

Mahoning County

- 1 positive bat resulted in two human exposures
- 4 positive raccoons of which 1 positive raccoon resulted in three human exposures.

Rabies is a fatal viral zoonosis and a serious public health threat. All mammals, such as raccoons, skunks, foxes and bats, are believed susceptible to the disease. Rabies is transmitted when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts/scratches in skin, or onto mucous membranes from saliva.

The Mahoning County District Board of Health is reminding residents to protect themselves from the ever-present threat of rabies by following these precautions:

- **Do not feed, touch or adopt wild animals** and be cautious around stray cats and dogs.
- Teach children to leave wildlife alone and be sure that your child knows to tell you if an animal bites or scratches them.
- Have your pet cats, dogs, and ferrets vaccinated for rabies and keep their vaccinations current.
- Keep trash can lids secure. Open containers can attract wildlife.
- Feed pets indoors. Never leave food outdoors that can attract wildlife.

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- Bat-proof your home. For instructions see <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/bats/management/index.html>

If bitten or scratched, call your doctor for medical advice. If your pet has contact with a wild animal, call your veterinarian.

Report any bite/scratch incidents or other exposures to your local health department.

- Please contact the Youngstown City Health District at (330) 743-3333 if you are involved in a pet or human exposure in Youngstown.
- Please contact the Mahoning County District Board of Health at (330) 270-2855 menu selection #2 if you are involved in a pet or human exposure in all other Mahoning County communities.

Additional information can be obtained from the Ohio Department of Health Zoonotic Disease Program website at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/dis/zoonoses/rabies/rab1.aspx> or by phone at (614) 752-1029 menu selection #2 or can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>

The Mahoning County District Board of Health is sponsoring a rabies vaccination clinic for dogs, cats, and ferrets. Rabies vaccination for all dogs, cats, and ferrets over 3 months of age is required in Mahoning County. No appointment is necessary for the clinic. Cost is \$6.00 per shot.

- Date: Saturday, September 21, 2013
Struthers Police Department Garage
6 Elm Street
1 PM – 4 PM

Pet owners must have their pets on a leash, in a cage, or inside a pillowcase.