



# News

Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders  
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**For Immediate Release**

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## **BURLCO CAUTIONS RESIDENTS TO BE AWARE OF RABIES**

### **AVOID STRAY ANIMALS; VACCINATE PETS**

The Burlington County Health Department is asking residents to be cautious, and to avoid strange, wild and/or stray animals.

“We want to remind all residents that rabies is still present in the county,” Freeholder Mary Ann O’Brien said. “It is recommended that, if you are unfamiliar with an animal, you should stay away from it.”

Already in 2012, there have been 23 confirmed cases of rabies in wildlife in Burlington County. Rabies has been seen in raccoons, bats, skunks, foxes, and a groundhog this year. Rabies is always fatal in animals and is fatal in humans if prompt treatment is not sought.

Pet owners are encouraged to have their pets vaccinated for rabies. There is also a vaccine for humans that can be given to individuals who might have been exposed to rabies. The vaccine is a series of injections that has proved effective in preventing the disease from developing in humans if administered early enough. The best way to avoid rabies is prevention.

The County Health Department is making the following recommendations:

#### **Protect yourself against rabies:**

- Do not touch or feed wild animals, or stray dogs or cats.
- Keep garbage in tightly sealed containers.
- Stay away from any animal that is behaving aggressively or a wild animal that appears ill or is acting unusually friendly. Call your local animal control officer or police department to report the animal.
- If you find a bat indoors that may have had contact with someone, don’t release it before calling 311 to determine whether it should be tested

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**Protect your pet against rabies:**

- Make sure your dog or cat is up-to-date on rabies vaccinations.
- Keep your dog leashed while outdoors unless at a specified off-leash area or park.
- Do not leave your pets outdoors unattended.
- Do not try to separate animals that are fighting.
- If your pet has been in contact with an animal that might be rabid, contact your veterinarian.
- Feed pets indoors.

**If you are bitten or scratched by an animal:**

- Immediately wash the wound with lots of soap and water.
- Seek medical care from your health care provider.
- If the animal is a pet, get the owner's name, address and telephone number to give to the Health Department so they can ensure the animal is not rabid.
- For information about medical follow-up, call your medical provider.

For more information about rabies, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/> or contact the Burlington County Health Department at 609-265-5548.

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