

News Release 5/12/2021

Spring Oral Rabies Baiting in Columbiana County

Lisbon-The Columbiana County Health Department reported today that the (USDA-APHIS) United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services will be distributing Oral Rabies Vaccine (ORV) baits in the western part of Columbiana County starting Monday May 17-24, 2021. There is no exposure risk in handling intact bait. As a precaution, people should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling any rabies vaccine bait. Glove use is recommended.

Rabies is a viral disease that affects animals and people and is still virtually 100 percent fatal. Raccoon-rabies variant (RRV) is of particular public health concern because it can infect so many domestic animals and people. Ohio's effort to keep RRV from spreading throughout Ohio began in 1997 and was so successful in subsequent years that states including Pennsylvania and West Virginia now have baiting programs.

Since pet dogs and cats that roam and hunt can come into contact with rabid animals and potentially transmit the disease to people, it is very important to make sure all dogs and cats are up-to-date on their rabies vaccination which is required by law.

The Columbiana County Health Department is still offering a raccoon drop off location. In a partnership agreement, The United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services has provided the health department with a freezer with weekly pickup services. This enhanced surveillance is for non-human exposures, such as someone seeing a sick animal on their property, fresh road kill and nuisance animals.

Persons submitting these specimens must humanely kill the animal if not done already without damaging the skull. Tissue must be fresh. Do not submit maggot-infested or extremely decomposed specimens. All specimens shall be handled using water-repellent gloves and double bagged to prevent further exposure. Once the specimen is submitted, clerical will ask for an address or GPS of the location of the raccoon. Specimens can be submitted Monday-Friday from 8am-4pm at the health department at 7360 State Route 45 Lisbon, Ohio 44432.

For more information contact the Rabies Information Line at the Ohio Department of Health at: 1-888-574-6656 or (614) 752-1387.