

February 16, 2018

**RACCOON TESTS POSITIVE FOR
RABIES Delray Beach, FL**

Contact:

Public Information

Press50@flhealth.gov 561-671-4014



Delray Beach- Florida Department of Health Laboratory confirmed today that a raccoon that fought with a dog near Dunlin Road east of I-95 has tested positive for rabies. The dog owner sustained scratches breaking up the fight and will undergo rabies exposure prophylaxis. The dog is undergoing further evaluation by Animal Care and Control to determine if quarantine is necessary.

Animal Care & Control was notified Wednesday, February 14, that a raccoon in the Dunlin Road area had fought with a Rhodesian Ridgeback named Lulu. The dog owner broke up the fight by grabbing the raccoon and throwing it in a nearby lake, The Animal Control Officer was able to retrieve the raccoon from the lake and send it for testing. The dog owner sustained scratches and will be placed on a preventive rabies shot series over the next two weeks. The dog will have to be quarantined a minimum of 45 days at its home and possibly longer pending the evaluation.

According to the Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County this is the first confirmed rabid animal this year in the county. Residents in the area of Dunlin Road east of I-95 should take the necessary precautions to avoid contact with any wild animals.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies-specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

The following advice is issued:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Animal Care & Control at 561-233-1200.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- Spay or neuter your pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets that may not be properly cared for or regularly vaccinated.
- **Do not** handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- **Never** adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.

- Teach children **never** to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas where they might come in contact with people and pets.

For further information on rabies, go to the Florida Department of Health website:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html>

or contact the Florida Health Palm Beach County, 561-840-4500. Animals exhibiting signs of sickness and aggressive behavior should be reported to Animal Control at 561-233-1200.

####