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### **Department of Health Confirms Rabies in a Dog from Carlsbad**

*Multiple individuals exposed need  
rabies prophylaxis*

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Department of Health confirmed rabies in a female dog yesterday from the city of Carlsbad. The dog had been bitten by a wild skunk 3 weeks before developing symptoms of rabies and was euthanized and samples sent in for testing. The Department is interviewing individuals who had contact with the dog and/or her puppies to determine if they were exposed to rabies. Several family members, including two young children, will be given a series of rabies vaccinations to prevent them from developing rabies, which is a 100% fatal disease.

“This case of rabies in a dog emphasizes the importance of vaccinating your pets to protect your children, family, and community,” said Dr. Catherine Torres, Cabinet Secretary for Department of Health. “Unvaccinated pets can be exposed to a rabid wild animal and put your family members at unnecessary risk and exposure to a very dangerous and fatal disease.”

In the last few weeks, there have been 8 skunks that tested positive for rabies in the Carlsbad area and over a dozen unvaccinated dogs have been euthanized due to their exposure to a rabid skunk.

“This outbreak of rabies in skunks in the Carlsbad area needs to be taken very seriously by everyone in the community and surrounding area,” said Dr. Paul Ettestad, the Department of Health’s public health veterinarian. “Everyone should encourage their family and their neighbors to have their pets vaccinated against rabies to protect their community.”

The following guidelines can help protect you and your family from rabies:

- Keep pets on a leash at all times. Pets should be up-to-date on rabies vaccinations and wearing current license tags on their collar. If your cat or dog has been bitten or scratched, call your pet’s veterinarian, even if the wound is superficial.
- Horses and other valuable livestock should be considered for rabies vaccination also to protect them from wild rabid animals that may attack them.



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- Stay away from wild or unfamiliar animals. Do not attempt to feed, approach, or touch wild animals (alive or dead). Teach this important message to your children and keep a close eye on your kids at all times.
- If you see a sick or dead wild animal, or a wild animal acting abnormally in this area, report it to your local animal control authorities. Rabid animals may show no fear of people and may even seem friendly or become aggressive.
- Don't leave pet food, water, or filled garbage cans out overnight as this could attract wild animals to your home.

If you are bitten or scratched by a wild animal or a pet, the Department of Health recommends the following guidelines:

- Wash all wounds and contact areas thoroughly with soap and water.
- Contact your physician immediately for evaluation. The Department of Health is available to physicians for consultation about rabies at (505) 827-0006.
- Call the local animal control department to report the incident; provide them with an accurate description of the animal.
- Try to keep the animal confined, but don't risk further injury if the animal is dangerous.
- Keep children away from all animals involved in the incident

For more information about rabies visit the Department of Health's website at <http://nmhealth.org/ERD/HealthData/rabies.shtml>.

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