

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223

Rabies Case Confirmed in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has confirmed a positive rabies case in southwest Nebraska. “This confirmed case involves a skunk with rabies,” states Melissa Propp, RN, Surveillance Coordinator at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department.

Rabies is an infectious viral disease that affects the nervous system of humans and other mammals. People get rabies from the bite of an animal with rabies. Any wild mammal, like a raccoon, skunk, fox, coyote, or bat, can have rabies and transmit it to people. According to the Center for Disease Control, rabies is a medical urgency. Any wounds should be immediately washed and receive medical attention from a health care professional.

If you discover a dead wild animal that may have infected your pets, remove the animal from the area by using a shovel, wearing gloves and placing it in a bag. Contact your local veterinarian in regards to rabies testing.

“We can’t stress enough the importance of vaccinating your pets against rabies,” explains Propp. “The majority of rabies incidents occur in wildlife instead of domestic animals. This is due to the increase in pet vaccination, which we highly recommend.”

Animals with rabies may act differently from healthy animals. Wild animals may move slowly or may act as if they are tame. A pet that is usually friendly may snap at you or may try to bite. Some signs of rabies in animals are:

- changes in an animal’s behavior
- general sickness
- problems swallowing
- increased drooling
- aggression

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. For more information call Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th Street, McCook – one block north of Arby’s. You can also follow us on [Facebook.com/swnphd](https://www.facebook.com/swnphd) and [Twitter@swpublichealth](https://twitter.com/swpublichealth).

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