

Public Health Notice – Rabies Alert

Tarrant County Public Health would like to remind the public that bats are wild animals and grounded bats should never be touch or handled. Bats can be infected with rabies. Not all sick bats are rabid, and not all rabid bats appear sick.

On December 27th, 2023, a bat was found in the 900 block of Carondolet Ct. in River Oaks, TX 76114. The bat later tested positive for rabies.

If you think that you or someone else may have come in physical contact with this bat, please call:

City of River Oaks – Animal Control

817-626-1991 x 333

jbrown@riveroakspd.com

Rabies exposure occurs only when a person is bitten or scratched by a potentially rabid animal, or when abrasions, open wounds, or mucous membranes are contaminated with saliva, brain, or nervous system tissue of a potentially rabid animal. Touching such an animal, or contact with its urine or feces does not constitute an exposure.

A BAT IN A BUILDING

Bats will generally leave a building on their own, given the chance.

- If you find a bat in a room, do not try to catch it (unless testing is necessary because a person or pet has been sleeping in the room while the bat was present).
- To encourage a bat to leave on its own, open windows, turn the lights on, and leave the room, closing the door behind you and keeping children and pets out of the area.
- Check the area every few hours to see if the bat has departed—it may take up to 18 hours for a bat to leave a resting place.
- If you MUST remove a resting bat from a room immediately (because there is no way to avoid contact with people or pets), put on thick leather gloves and carefully place a wide-mouthed cup, jar, or coffee can over the resting bat, slip a piece of cardboard between the opening and the resting surface, then take the container outdoors to release the bat.
- NEVER HANDLE A BAT—ALIVE OR DEAD—WITH YOUR BARE HANDS.

SICK OR INJURED BATS

- Keep people and pets away from the bat and call animal control.

DEAD BATS

- Dead bats no longer pose a threat of rabies if they are not handled.
- If the bat is in an area where it may have come in contact with a person or pet, call your city's animal control agency.

IF SOMEONE IS BITTEN BY A BAT

- Call animal control immediately to report the incident, and administer first aid to the victim.

- If safely possible, confine or try to keep track of the bat until animal control arrives to capture if for testing.
- Animal control will need the name, address, and phone number of the victim and the victim's personal physician; the address where the incident occurred; and information on how and where the person was bitten.
- The victim should contact his or her personal physician as soon as possible, and inform Animal Control of physician's response
- The victim's personal physician will determine whether or not to initiate rabies post-exposure treatment pending the results of the test.

IF YOU PET CATCHES OR KILLS A BAT

- Confine the bat and call your city's animal control for further instructions.
- Confine the pet, preventing contact with person or animals outside the family until test results are received.

IF BATS HAVE TAKEN UP RESIDENCE

If bats are roosting in an attic or similar area, a one-way exit can be constructed which allows them to leave in search of food, but will prevent their re-entry. Many pest control professionals can help you with this problem, and Bat Conservation International can provide you with information on how to evict bats yourself. Do not use one-way exits during June and July or flightless young may be trapped inside!

For more information, contact your city's animal control agency.