![Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department logo]

News Release

Rabies Continues in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has confirmed the second positive rabies case in our health district for the year. "We are an area of elevated concern for rabies in Nebraska," states Melissa Propp, RN, Surveillance Coordinator at SWNPHD. "Southwest Nebraska had the first positive rabies case for 2017 and has had numerous reported cases since 2015."

This case of rabies involves another skunk and is located in Chase County. "Rabies is a deadly virus infection that affects the nervous system of humans and other mammals," explains Propp. 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. Contact your local veterinarian and public health department in regards to rabies testing and exposures.

According to the Center for Disease Control, rabies is a medical emergency. Any wounds should be immediately washed with soap and water. They should also receive medical attention from a health care professional.

"Vaccination is the best protection for keeping your pets safe," states Propp. "We recommend that residents contact their local veterinarian to make sure your pet's vaccinations are current. In addition, please be careful around stray or strange animals. If an animal bites you, and it is safe to do so, catch the animal and contact your veterinarian for testing. It may save you the pain and cost of rabies vaccinations."

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. For more information call Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223 or email nurse@swhealth.ne.gov . SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th Street, McCook – one block north of Arby's and 501 Broadway, Imperial – entrance on 5th Street. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook.com/swnphd and Twitter@swpublichealth.

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