

October 9, 2025  
For Immediate Release  
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### **Fifth Positive Rabies Case**

A fifth positive case of rabies in an animal has been reported to Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD). This positive rabies test was from a bat in Frontier County. This is the second positive bat in southwest Nebraska for 2025, and the highest number of rabies cases in a year since 2015.

Rabies is a deadly virus that affects the brain and is found in bats and other warm-blooded animals. Rabies is spread through the saliva or blood of an infected animal, which can include a bite or contact with an infected bat.

“Bats migrate in late summer and early fall, so increased activity is normal this time of year,” explains Melissa Propp RN, Clinic Manager at SWNPHD. “A bat with rabies may have unusual behavior such as being active during the day, inability to fly, or seeking contact with humans.”

#### **Bat safety**

Always avoid touching bats with your bare hands. Bat bites can be very small and difficult to see, making it hard to know if you had contact. If you think you have been bitten or scratched by a bat, wash the area with soap and water right away and seek medical attention.

#### **Protect your pets**

Pets are also at risk of rabies exposure from bats or stray animals near your home. Rabies is fatal to pets and once an animal shows signs of the disease it is too late for treatment. The most important way to help your pet is to make sure they are up to date on vaccinations, which will protect them if they are ever exposed to a rabid animal.

When possible, limit your pet from situations where they may encounter bats, skunks or stray animals to reduce their risk of getting rabies. If your pet has had contact or been bitten by a wild or stray animal, attempt to bring the wild animal to a vet for testing if you can do so safely. Always use extreme caution when handling wild animals and avoid touching them with your bare hands.

#### **Know the signs of rabies in pets**

- Sudden behavior changes
- Excessive drooling or difficulty swallowing

- Aggression or irritability

If you suspect your pet has been exposed to rabies, contact your veterinarian immediately.

“If you have questions about bats or rabies, you can always contact SWNPHD regarding rabies vaccination, testing, and exposures,” continues Propp.

For more information contact Melissa Propp, RN at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow SWNPHD on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram or view the website at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov) which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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