



NORTH SHORE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

BROWN DEER OFFICE
4800 W. Green Brook Dr.
Brown Deer, WI 53223-2496

SHOREWOOD OFFICE
2010 E. Shorewood Blvd.
Shorewood, WI 53211-2303

(414) 371-2980 • fax (414) 371-2988
nshealthdept.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Ann Christiansen, MPH
Office: (414) 371-2980

BATS TESTING POSITIVE FOR RABIES FOUND IN NORTH SHORE

*North Shore Health Department reminds residents to avoid contact with wild animals,
practice prevention measures*

Brown Deer - The North Shore Health Department (NSHD) has confirmed that two bats found in North Shore communities have tested positive for rabies. Both bats were captured by residents—one following contact with a human; the other with a dog.

Rabies is a serious viral disease that can be transmitted from infected mammals to humans through a bite, scratch, or when animal saliva comes into contact with broken skin. Rabies can be found in a variety of wild animals including raccoons, opossums, foxes, and bats. It can also be transmitted to domestic animals, including cats and dogs, from contact with infected wild animals.

Because bites and scratches from bats may go unnoticed, a physician should be contacted if a bat is found in the same room with a young child, an individual who is sleeping, or individuals whose contact with the bat is unknown. Treatment for human exposure to rabies is available and most effective when administered soon after a bite or exposure to a rabid animal. Rabies in humans is nearly always fatal once an infected person develops symptoms.

The NSHD reminds area residents to take precaution around wild or stray animals. If you find a bat or other animal that may be infected in your home, health officials advise safely capturing and containing the animal until a public health official or physician can be consulted.

To limit exposure to animals that may be infected, health officials advise:

- Avoiding contact with wild animals such as bats, raccoons, opossums, skunks, and foxes, especially animals that exhibit evidence of illness or disease.
- Vaccinating domestic cats and dogs against rabies, and maintaining control and supervision of your pets when outdoors.
- Preventing bats from accessing living quarters by keeping screens in good repair and closing small openings through which bats may enter.

To report human exposure to a bat or animal that may have rabies, contact your local public health department. In the North Shore communities of Bayside, Brown Deer, Fox Point, Glendale, River Hills, Shorewood and Whitefish Bay, call (414)371-2980. For more information, visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/rabies/index.htm>

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