

## **Rabies in Wildlife Continues to Pose Risks to Pets and People**

In 2013, rabies surveillance activities in Ohio identified four rabid raccoons in Mahoning County and three rabid cats in Trumbull County. In four of those cases, the animals exposed humans to the disease and the people had to go through painful and expensive treatment.

The best defense against the rabies virus is through vaccination. Even if your pets stay inside all the time, they still need to be vaccinated against rabies as wild animals, especially bats, can sometimes find their way into your home.

The Hocking County Health Department and local veterinarians Dr. Daubenmire and Dr. Trout are once again hosting the Annual Rabies Clinic on Saturday and Sunday, May 17 and 18 from 2-4 PM at the Logan Fairgrounds Shelterhouse. The cost is only \$10.00 per pet. Please keep dogs on a leash and keep cats in a carrier or covered box. After the first vaccination, dogs and cats should be revaccinated one year later and then every third year.

Here are some other ways you can protect yourself, your family and your pets from rabies:

- Avoid contact with wildlife and animals you don't know.
  - Do not feed wildlife or stray animals.
  - If you must feed your dog or cat outside, bring the food in at night to avoid attracting wildlife.
- Keep cats inside.
  - Cats are the most common pets to be identified with rabies.
  - Cats that are allowed to roam free outside are exposed to wildlife that could be carrying rabies.
- Spay or neuter your pets.
  - This can help reduce the number of abandoned and stray animals.
- Call your doctor and your local health department if you are bitten by an animal.
- Call your veterinarian if your pet gets into a fight with a wild animal.

For more information concerning rabies or the Annual Rabies Clinic, contact the Health Department at 740-385-3030 ext. 2 or visit our website at [www.hockingcountyhealthdepartment.com](http://www.hockingcountyhealthdepartment.com).