

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

RICH FITZGERALD
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

July 20, 2020

Dear Borough/Municipality Manager:

Over the past 19 years there has been a significant reduction in human and pet exposures to rabies throughout Allegheny County. This is largely due to the efforts of the rabies vaccination program for wild raccoons spearheaded by the United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (USDA), who the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) partners with for this massive effort. This year, employees and volunteers of ACHD and the USDA will be distributing vaccine-containing baits from **July 31st through August 31st** across Allegheny County. Baits will be delivered in every municipality of the County. Your municipality will be baited by hand and from vehicles between July 31st and August 10th. The enclosed flyer contains images of the two types of bait: One is a plastic sachet (looks like a ketchup packet) coated in fish meal, the other is a plastic sachet enclosed in a fish meal block. The fish scent attracts the raccoons who consume the bait and vaccine, resulting in the development of antibodies to the rabies virus.

The risk of adverse effects to humans and animals due to exposure to the vaccine is minimal, but we urge the public to avoid contact with the bait if possible. If a stray bait must be moved, it should be picked up using rubber or latex gloves or a shovel. We are also asking the public to **keep their dogs on a leash, indoors, or confined to their property as much as possible during baiting and the week after.**

In years past, we have specifically had problems with off-leash dogs consuming the baits in parks. Parks are common raccoon habitats and are therefore important areas to bait. This interferes with their intended purpose and concerns and upsets citizens. A sign informing the public of this information that can be posted in parks can be found at: www.achd.net/raccoon.

We are requesting that you help us to publicize the baiting effort in municipal newsletters, publications, and on social media with the educational materials attached and found on our website here: www.achd.net/raccoon. We also request that you inform your Emergency Management Coordinator.

If you need further information, or would like more physical copies of the printed materials, please contact me, Lori Horowitz, ACHD Rabies Baiting Project Manager, via email lori.horowitz@alleghenycounty.us or at 412-350-4046. Please let me know if your municipality is planning an activity such as a Community Day during the baiting periods so that we can avoid placing the baits within the celebration area.

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DEBRA BOGEN, MD, DIRECTOR
ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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WWW.ALLEGHENYCOUNTY.US/HEALTHDEPARTMENT



We appreciate your continuing cooperation and thank you in advance for helping us to spread the word. Through this effort, we hope to reduce the likelihood of a human case of rabies in Allegheny County and surrounding areas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lori Horowitz', written in a cursive style.

Lori Horowitz
ACHD Rabies Baiting Project Manager

Enclosures

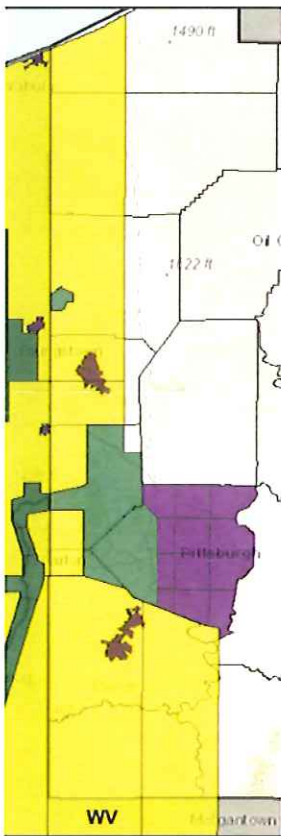
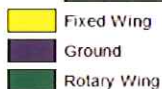
ORAL RABIES VACCINATION AREA

NOTICE

Cooperating Federal, State, and county agencies are conducting an oral raccoon rabies baiting project in western Pennsylvania. A vaccine packet is coated or placed inside a fishmeal block, which is very tasty to raccoons. The baits are dropped from low-flying airplanes or helicopters, or by local teams on foot or in vehicles. The vaccine can NOT cause rabies.

This year's operation will run:

July 31 – September 10, 2020



What if I find rabies baits?

Baits should be left alone – but intact baits can be moved if they are found where children and pets play. Damaged baits should be bagged and disposed in the trash.

- Wear gloves or use a plastic bag when picking up the baits.
- Toss intact baits into a fencerow, woodlot, ditch, or other raccoon habitat areas.
- Wash your hands after any skin contact with a bait.

What if my pet eats a bait?

- A few baits are not harmful, although eating a lot may cause vomiting or diarrhea.
- Do not risk getting bitten by taking a bait away from your pet.
- Confine your pet for a couple of days, and check the area for more baits.
- If your pet eats a bait, avoid your pet's saliva for 24 hours, and wash skin or wounds that may have been licked.

For information about the oral rabies baiting program, contact:

USDA Wildlife Services: 1-866-487-3297

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture: 1-717-772-2852

Pennsylvania Department of Health Information Line: 1-877-PA Health

Erie County Department of Health: 1-814-451-6700

Allegheny County Department of Health: 1-412-350-4046

For information concerning accidental contact with baits, call 1-877-722-6725.