



West Windsor Township

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Health

Public Health Advisory

May 18, 2011

A fox found in Wellington Estates in West Windsor Township on May 14th has tested positive for the rabies virus. This fox was located in close proximity to the West Windsor Little League ball fields. A resident noticed the animal in his rear yard exhibiting strange behavior and promptly notified the Police Department. The Animal Control Officer responded and captured the fox for testing. There were no known human or domestic pet exposures to this fox. This incident highlights the importance of vaccinating all pets for rabies and avoiding contact with wildlife.

Rabies is caused by a virus that can affect warm-blooded animals, including dogs, cats, and humans. The disease is spread through direct contact with an infected animal's saliva and can be spread through a bite, direct contact with an existing open wound or possibly through spray to the eye. Rabies in humans is rare in the United States but immediate attention is warranted in all cases of exposures from domestic and wild animals. Individuals exposed are directed to immediately wash the exposed area with soap and water, seek medical treatment without delay and notify the Health Department promptly.

Animals with rabies can be aggressive, vicious or may appear to be "drunk" and have difficulty walking. In some rare cases, an animal with rabies can appear normal. The best way to prevent exposure is to stay away from strays and wildlife. Residents are encouraged to take preventative measures such as bat-proofing homes, securing trash cans from wildlife, vaccinating pets and educating young children to stay away from animals. Notify the Police Department at 609-799-1222 if you notice wildlife acting strangely, or if nocturnal animals, such as raccoons or opossums, are seen wandering during daylight hours. For additional information, please contact the West Windsor Township Health Department at 609-936-8400.