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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 1, 2015

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**Bat Tests Positive for Rabies in Milwaukee**

*City of Milwaukee Health Department reminds residents to avoid contact with wild animals, practice prevention measures*

MILWAUKEE – The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) has confirmed a positive test of rabies in a bat in the city of Milwaukee. The bat was captured by a citizen and tested after being found appearing ill in a park.

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 such as raccoons, opossums, foxes, and bats. It can also be transmitted to domestic animals, including cats and dogs, from contact with infected wild animals.

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 if preventive treatment is not obtained quickly after exposure.

The City of Milwaukee Health Department 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 city of Milwaukee, call (414) 286-3521. For more information, visit [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health).

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*Think Health. Act Now!*

