



Tom Barrett
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE
Commissioner of Health

Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990
web site: www.milwaukee.gov/health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2013

Contact: Sarah DeRoo
Office (414) 286-3548
Cell (414) 708-4060

Bat Tests Positive for Rabies in Milwaukee

City of Milwaukee Health Department advises residents to take steps to prevent exposure

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 and tested after being found in a household and coming into contact with an adult in the home.

“Because the bat was captured, there is no imminent threat to the public,” said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker.

Rabies 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.

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 an individual with a mental disability. 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.

“We advise Milwaukee residents to take steps to keep themselves and their families safe from exposure to wild animals that may have rabies,” said Commissioner Baker.

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, the MHD advises:

- 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.
- Preventing bats from accessing living quarters by keeping screens in good repair and closing small openings through which bats may enter.

For more information, visit www.milwaukee.gov/health. To report 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.

###

Think Health. Act Now!

