



# CALDWELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

**Health Director**  
Denise M. Michaud

2345 Morganton Blvd., Suite B • PO Box 400 • (828) 426-8400 • FAX (828)426-8450 • [www.caldwellcountync.org](http://www.caldwellcountync.org)  
**Mission: To Promote, Protect, and Improve the Health of Our Community**

**February 24, 2016**  
**For Immediate Release**

Anna Martin, MPH  
Health Education Supervisor  
Caldwell County Health Department  
828-426-8506  
[amartin@caldwellcountync.org](mailto:amartin@caldwellcountync.org)

## **CALDWELL COUNTY CONFIRMED RABIES CASE**

On February 23, 2016, Caldwell County Animal Control was notified by the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health that a raccoon submitted for testing was infected with the rabies virus. On February 22, 2016, a resident of Caldwell County contacted Animal Control and reported their dog killed a raccoon on February 21, 2016.

Animal control found that the dog in question was not current on rabies vaccinations. Reports from the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health stated the raccoon tested positive for the rabies virus. At this time the owners of the infected dog have surrendered the dog to Animal Control.

North Carolina law requires that any unvaccinated animal that comes into contact with a rabid animal must be euthanized or be quarantined for six months in a facility authorized by the local health director.

Please make sure your pet's rabies vaccinations are current as this will help to protect the animal against rabies. Rabies is a viral disease of the central nervous system that is almost always fatal once symptoms begin. The virus is found in the saliva of an animal with rabies and is usually transmitted by a bite or scratch.

People can protect themselves and their pets from rabies by taking a few simple precautions:

- Make sure all your companion animals are up to date on their rabies vaccinations. They should always wear their license tags.
- Supervise your pets to prevent exposure.
- If a bat is found inside your home you should contact Animal Care & Control
- If your animal is exposed to a potentially rabid animal wear glove to protect yourself from the infectious saliva that may be on your animal's coat.
- Teach your children to stay away from wild animals including bats or animals they don't know.
- Avoid attracting wildlife to your home by removing food sources such as food scraps and removing cat and dog food at night.

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Raccoons and other wild animals are scavengers and search for sources of food. It is important to keep all garbage containers sealed tightly and especially areas of high food disposal. This also pertains to pet food bowls. When your pet finishes eating, clean out the bowl to avoid other animals from getting the food and keep discarded foods inaccessible to animals to lessen the chance of them coming to your residence or business to look for food.

If there are any questions concerning rabies and its prevention, please contact the Animal Care & Control Division of the Caldwell County Health Department at 829 Fairview Drive SW, Lenoir, NC 28645 or call 828-757-8625. If there is an emergency situation outside the normal working hours of 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday, please notify the Caldwell County Sheriff Department at 828-758-2324.

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