



Public Health
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Frederick County Health Department

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

JULY 23, 2024

Groundhog from Taskers Chance Neighborhood in Frederick City Tests Positive for Rabies

FREDERICK, MD – On July 22, 2024, the Frederick County Health Department (FCHD) was notified that a groundhog from the Taskers Chance neighborhood in Frederick City, Maryland, tested positive for the rabies virus. The groundhog was picked up from the stormwater management pond area near the Taskers Chance swimming pool on Bel Aire Lane. Frederick County Animal Control collected the groundhog on Thursday, July 18, 2024, around 9:00 p.m. after receiving a report that it had attacked a dog earlier that evening.

The FCHD recommends that any person who may have had contact with a groundhog or any other wildlife consult their health care provider and notify the FCHD's Community Health Services Office at 301-600-3342. If your pet has had contact with a groundhog or other wildlife, consult with your veterinarian and notify the FCHD's Environmental Health Office at 301-600-1717.

Rabies is a viral disease that, once transmitted, is nearly always fatal to humans unless prompt post-exposure treatment is administered. Rabies mainly infects mammals (warm-blooded animals who nurse their young) and is spread through the saliva of the infected animal, usually by a bite.

Symptoms of rabies in animals may include fear of water, excessive salivation, failure to eat or drink, limping, unusually friendly or aggressive behavior, and/or other atypical behaviors such as nocturnal animals emerging during the daytime.

According to Barry Glotfelty, Director for FCHD's Environmental Health Services, "To protect your family from possible rabies exposure, make sure that your pets are currently vaccinated, and do not touch or play with wild or stray animals." If you or your pets have contact with a stray or wild animal, call Animal Control at 301-600-1544 to speak with an Animal Control Officer. For general rabies questions, call Environmental Health Services at 301-600-1717. Visit <https://health.frederickcountymd.gov/RABIES> for more information.

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