



# Press

# Release



wichitafallstx.gov

**For Immediate Release**

**September 22, 2021**

## **Positive Rabies – Bat Exposure**

Wichita Falls, Texas - Wichita Falls, Texas. The Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health District is alerting the public concerning a rabies exposure related to a bat that came into contact with two dogs near the Fountain Park addition near University Avenue and McNeil Avenue. The dogs were found playing with a bat in their backyard. The bat was picked up by an Animal Care Officer and sent to the Department of State Health Services for testing. The lab called on September 21 and notified Animal Services that the bat tested positive for rabies. As a result, the two dogs will be placed in isolation according to State mandated regulations.

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that attacks the central nervous system and is most often seen among wild animals such as bats, raccoons, skunks, coyotes, and foxes, but any mammal can be infected with rabies. The Center for Disease Control recommends staying away from wildlife, especially bats. It is important not to handle them and avoid contact. Bats can spread the virus year-round. In addition, bites from bats can often go undetected because their teeth are very small. Always seek medical treatment if you come in contact with a bat or any wildlife. If you find a bat, it is important not to handle the bat and immediately call Animal Control.

The first sign of rabies is usually a change in an animal's behavior. It may become excited or irritable and attack anything in its path. Staggering, convulsions, choking, unusual sounds, and paralysis may also be seen. Animals usually die within one week after showing symptoms.

People are usually exposed to the rabies virus when an infected animal bites them or if saliva from a rabid animal enters an open cut or mucous membrane (eyes, nose, or mouth). If a human becomes infected, flu-like symptoms will appear and progress into delirium, abnormal behavior, hallucinations, and insomnia. Once clinical signs of rabies appear, the disease is nearly always fatal.

If you or someone you know has been bitten or exposed to a possibly rabid animal, please contact Angela Bakken, the Animal Care and Kennel Coordinator. She can be reached at (940) 761-8837 or by email at [Angela.Bakken@wichitafallstx.gov](mailto:Angela.Bakken@wichitafallstx.gov).

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