

UNION COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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News Release

Rabid Dog Found in Northeastern Union County

March 27, 2015, Monroe, NC – Health Officials at the Union County Division of Public Health announced Friday, March 27 that a dog in the area of Mullis Newsome Rd. and New Salem Rd. was confirmed to have rabies. The dog, a brown/white, female Husky presented with neurological symptoms consistent with rabies and died the next day.

Division of Public Health and Sheriff Department staff are working to identify people and animals in the affected area who may have been exposed to the rabid dog. Flyers are being distributed to homes of those who are most at risk of exposure.

Phillip Tarte, Public Health Director for the Union County Department of Human Services states, “Any person who may have come in contact with this dog between March 8 and March 26 should call their doctor immediately. They may also call the Communicable Disease line of the Division of Public Health at 704-296-4874 for an exposure evaluation.”

People living in this area should also be aware of exposure to any other animal that may have been behaving unusually. The rabies virus is usually transmitted through a bite from the animal or from contact with saliva that enters the eyes, nose, mouth or broken skin.

According to Tarte, “Rabies is a serious and preventable disease. It is important to prevent exposure to the rabies virus whenever possible. Once an exposure has occurred prompt treatment is essential. Rabies is fatal without this treatment.”

Residents with a concern about their pet’s exposure to this dog or exposure to other rabid animals in the area should call their veterinarian immediately or the Animal Control Division of the Union County Sheriffs Department at 704-283-2308.

Union County Division of Public Health makes the following recommendations to the general public:

- Vaccinate your pets regularly according to North Carolina law
- Keep children and pets away from wild and strange animals
- Don’t allow pets to run at large
- If your pet comes in contact with wild or strange animal, avoid contact with both animals
- Make sure trash can lids are on tightly and pet food is not left outside

- For any animal bite, the wound should be cleaned thoroughly (for at least 10 minutes). Then contact your doctor or Union County Division of Public Health at 704-296-4874.

Rabies is a disease caused by a virus that is spread through the saliva of an infected animal. When contracted by humans, rabies is fatal unless early treatment is sought. There is no cure once symptoms develop, so immediate treatment is important to prevent the disease. In North Carolina rabies is most common in raccoons, skunks, and foxes, but has also been found in dogs, cats, horses, cattle, bats and other animals.

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