



635 North Erie Street
 Toledo, Ohio 43604-5317
 419.213.4100
 419.213.4017 Fax
 boardofhealth@co.lucas.oh.us



Shannon M. Jones, MBA, MPH
 Interim Health Commissioner

**LUCAS COUNTY
 REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT
 BOARD MEMBERS**

Paul J. Komisarek, President
 Barbara Sarantou, Vice President
 Cheryl Crowder, RN, BSN
 Amr Elaskary, CPA, CFE
 Sonia Flunder-McNair
 Ted Kaczorowski
 David Karmol
 Richard L. Munk, MD
 Susan Postal, EMT-P
 Johnathon Ross, MD
 Michelle Schultz
 Donna A Woodson, MD

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
 EMPLOYER**

The Department operates in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Visit us on the web at:
www.lucascountyhealth.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Heather Burnette, PIO
 (419) 309-0153

August 17, 2023

Bat Tests Positive for Rabies

A bat collected in Lucas County has tested positive for rabies. This is the first confirmed rabies-positive bat in the county this year. While no one was reported being bitten by the bat, two barn cats who came in contact with the bat, were previously vaccinated and are receiving boosters as a precaution.

“Rabies tends to be more common in the spring and summer months. It’s important not to handle wild animals, to be aware of unusual acting animals, and to keep pets vaccinated against rabies,” said Shannon Jones, Interim Health Commissioner.

Rabies is a virus that affects the nervous system in humans and other mammals. A person may contract rabies through a bite, scratch, or saliva from an infected animal. A bat bite or scratch may not be seen or even felt by the injured person due to the small size of its teeth or claws. A potential rabies exposure should never be taken lightly. *If untreated, rabies is fatal.*

Animals do not have to be aggressive or behaving erratically to have rabies. Changes in any animal’s normal behavior can be early signs of rabies. Bats that are on the ground, unable to fly, or active during the day are more likely than others to be rabid. Such bats are often easily approached but should never be handled.

Toledo-Lucas County Health Department officials are reminding residents that bats are more active during the summer months, and Lucas County residents should do the following to prevent the spread of rabies:

- If a bat is in your home, **do not** release the bat outdoors until **after** speaking with animal control or public health officials. It may be possible to test the bat and avoid the need to receive rabies treatment.
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Keep vaccinations up-to-date for all dogs, cats, ferrets, and other animals you own.

Ohio Administrative Code 3701-3-28 states: “Whenever a person is bitten by a dog or other animal, report of such bite shall be made within 24 hours to the health commissioner of the district in which such bite occurred.” Please call the Health Department at 419-213-4100 option 4 to report a bite or with additional questions.

For additional resources on animal bites and rabies, please visit:

<http://www.lucascountyhealth.com/community-health/animal-bites/>

###