



Health and Human Services **MEDIA RELEASE**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2015

Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County (DOH-Sarasota) issues Rabies Alert at Honore and Bahia Vista area of Sarasota

SARASOTA COUNTY— The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County (DOH-Sarasota) received laboratory confirmation on Wednesday, March 25 of rabies in a goat.

Health officials say another goat in the tribe had also been attacked by an unknown animal about 10 days ago. The rabid goat was acting aggressively and in an abundance of caution the animal was euthanized and its head was sent to DOH State Lab in Tampa for testing. The goat was positive for rabies. According to the veterinarians who treated the goat's injuries, the attacking animal was not large; they believe that it was probably a raccoon or fox.

According to Tom Higginbotham, Environmental Health Director for DOH-Sarasota, a **Rabies Alert** has been issued for 60-days in the area of Honore Avenue and Bahia Vista Street in Sarasota where the goats reside.

The Rabies Alert includes the geographic area as noted below:

- North of Bahia Vista Street to Fruitville Road
- South of Bahia Vista Street to Bee Ridge Road
- East of Honore Ave to Apex Road
- West of Honore Ave to McIntosh Road

All residents especially in this vicinity should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Sarasota County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not give a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

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MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; DOHSarasotaNews@flhealth.gov

Website: www.sarasotahealth.org



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An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

The following advice is issued to the public to prevent the exposure to rabies:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals.
- If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Sarasota County Animal Services at 941-861-9500.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- **Do not** handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- **Never** adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children **never** to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas, where they might come in contact with people and pets.

Unusual acting animals should be reported to Sarasota County Animal Services at 941-861-9500 for handling. Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County at 941-861-6133 in Sarasota.

For more information on rabies, go to the Florida Department of Health website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html> or call the Department of Health in Sarasota County Environmental Health office at 941-861-6133 or Sarasota County Animal Services at 941-861-9500.

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View the complete policy at www.scgov.net/ADA/Pages/default.aspx



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