

Name _____

Date _____

Public Health Announcement

The Guilford County Department of Public Health is hosting two rabies clinics this month in honor of World Rabies Day on Sept. 28. The rabies vaccination will cost \$5 per shot and will protect your pet for one calendar year. Dogs must be leashed and cats must be kept in carriers.

The State of North Carolina requires dogs, cats, and ferrets to be vaccinated. The health department recommends that other animals that have regular contact with humans, such as horses, should be vaccinated as well. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the rabies virus causes approximately 55,000 human deaths worldwide each year, with most of the deaths occurring in children under 15. The rabies virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. When an animal has rabies (or is rabid), the virus circulates throughout its body and is transmitted to other animals or humans through its saliva. The most commonly infected animals are raccoons, bats skunks, and foxes.

The best ways to keep your pet from becoming rabid are to keep it leashed in public, as roaming pets are exposed to wild animals. Feed your pet indoors if possible. Wild animals will venture into your basement, outbuildings, or garage to seek food, so be sure the storage location you select for your pet food is secure. Moreover, do not try to touch, feed, or rescue wild animals. Do not pick up dead animals as the virus could still be present.

This year in Guilford County, the majority of the animal rabies cases have involved raccoons, with foxes in a very close second place. Guilford County has recorded fifteen cases of animal rabies thus far this year.

