

Town of Charlemont - Rabies Protocol – Reporting Procedure

Rabies is a life threatening illness which is contracted by both animal and human hosts through contact with an infected animal. As rabies is transmitted through the saliva and bodily fluids; in an effort to protect the safety of citizens, **all animal bites and possible exposure through open wounds and mucous membranes must be immediately reported to the ANIMAL INSPECTOR/ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER.**

Because multiple agencies (Animal Inspector, Board of Health, Ambulance, Police, Emergency Dispatch, etc.) could receive the first report of a potential rabies event, the Board of Selectmen has established a procedure for each agency. The purpose of this procedure is to insure that protective action is taken expeditiously and effectively in the best interests of human health. Further, qualified medical attention should be sought immediately.

The reporting process is as follows:

- If there is a bite, scratch or direct contact from an animal, immediately contact the **Animal Inspector/Animal Control Officer** at 413-339-4335 Option #_4_ then #_2_ (listen for the prompts).

**This means ALL bites, scratches and possible exposure:
Animal to Animal OR Animal to Human.**

- If a human has been bitten, or potentially exposed the **Charlemont Board of Health must be notified.**
- Upon notification of a bite, if there is a human contact, the Animal Inspector/Animal Control Officer will immediately notify the local Board of Health through the Secretary to the boards at 413-339-4335.
- When Emergency Personnel, Police, Fire, Ambulance, a Board of Health Member, or a Town Official receives notification, *as the first point of contact after a potential exposure*; he/she will immediately Contact the Animal Inspector/Animal Control officer at 413-339-4335.
- The Animal Inspector/Animal Control Officer, upon notification, will immediately respond to the scene and issue quarantine notification as warranted. He will also report necessary information to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health State Animal Inspector. Because ongoing communication and information sharing between AI/ACO and BOH will minimize potential harm and safety risks to citizens.
- BOH and Animal Control officer will share vital and pertinent information including quarantine length of animal, whether the animal was vaccinated prior to exposure, or any human contact.
- If a specimen is available, the Animal Control Officer will prepare and ship the specimen as directed by Massachusetts State Law.

- Test Results will be forwarded to necessary parties as they are received from the State Epidemiology Lab.
- In the event that the Animal Inspector/Animal Control Officer is unavailable, He/she will make a determination as to who the back up person will be on a case by case basis. The Secretary to the Boards, the Executive Secretary and Emergency Dispatch will be notified if the Animal Inspector/Animal Control Officer will unavailable for any extended period of time.

Voted by the BOS 10/3/11

Voted to edit by the BOS 11/14/11

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