



# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Animal Control

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## Rabid Fox Confirmed In Stedman; Two People Bitten

FAYETTEVILLE – This morning the State Public Health Lab in Raleigh confirmed a case of rabies in Stedman. On Tuesday, Oct. 10, a fox attacked and bit two people, who have begun treatment for rabies exposure. Stedman Police killed the fox, which was then picked up by Animal Control and sent to the state lab.

Animal Control Officer Sgt. Jessica Donovan said a 74-year-old woman pulled up to a house at 7318 Clinton Rd., Stedman. As the woman was getting out of her van, the fox attacked her and bit her on her leg and foot. The woman's 10-year-old granddaughter came outside the house, not realizing the rabid fox was outside. The fox chased the girl and bit her on her arm. The woman and the girl sustained puncture bite wounds and were treated for the wounds. They will also undergo a series of rabies treatment shots. A Stedman Police officer responded to the home and killed the fox.

This is the second case of rabies in the county since Jan. 1.

**All pet owners are urged to check the vaccination status of their pets. If pets are not vaccinated or are due for a booster shot, they should be taken to a local veterinarian for rabies vaccination immediately.**

The first sign of rabies in animals is a change in behavior. Animals may become aggressive, attacking for no reason, or they may become very quiet. Wild animals can lose their fear of people and act tame. Rabid animals may walk in a circle, drag a leg, or fall over. Some cannot swallow so they are not able to eat or drink and often drool. Animals usually die within a week after first becoming ill.

Avoiding wild animals and keeping your distance from stray dogs and cats is the first step in preventing an animal bite. Any pet, which appears to have been in a fight while outside, should be handled very cautiously and seen by a veterinarian.

If you are bitten or scratched by an animal:

- Immediately wash the wound under running water for at least 10 minutes with lots of soap. Seek medical attention/advice.
- Call Animal Control at 321-6852 Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call the Sheriff's Office at 323-1500 after 5 p.m., weekends and holidays.
- Go to the emergency room.

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It is also important to vaccinate your pets for rabies and keep their shots current. Pet owners are reminded that all dogs and cats must be vaccinated against rabies, as required by state law. Pet owners are subject to a fine of \$100 for each unvaccinated dog or cat. Pets must be vaccinated when they reach the age of four months.