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MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Rabies Notice

April 30, 2024 - The Montgomery County Director of Public Health is issuing an urgent notice to residents and visitors regarding the escalating incidence of Rabies within the county. Recent months have witnessed a notable rise in confirmed and suspected cases of rabies in both wild and domestic animals. While wildlife are predominantly affected, the increased interaction between humans and domestic animals heightens the risk of transmission and consequent health effects.

To safeguard against rabies and its potential health impacts:

- Ensure regular veterinary visits for all cats, ferrets, and dogs, adhering to North Carolina law mandating rabies vaccinations.
- Exercise strict control over pets, keeping cats and ferrets indoors and supervising dogs closely during outdoor activities.
- Consider spaying or neutering pets to reduce the population of stray animals, which may lack proper care and vaccination.
- Avoid feeding wildlife and discourage them from taking up residence near your home.
- Secure trash cans and pet food containers to prevent attracting wildlife.
- Seal openings and gaps around your home to prevent wildlife from entering.

If encountering an animal displaying signs of illness, difficulty swallowing, excessive drooling, aggression, abnormal behavior, or paralysis, refrain from approaching it. Instead, contact animal control, NC Wildlife or local law enforcement for guidance and assistance.

Rabies is primarily transmitted through direct contact with infected saliva or nervous system tissue, typically via animal bites. While non-bite exposures are rare, they can occur through scratches or open wounds exposed to infected material, potentially leading to severe health complications or death in humans.

For further information, visit the CDC Rabies Information Page, contact the Montgomery County Health Department at 910-573-1393, or reach out to NC Wildlife at 866-318-2401.

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