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**Worcester County**  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

Worcester County Health Department

For more information contact:

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410-641-9559

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **RABIES AWARENESS AND FALL RABIES CLINICS**

Rabid animals continue to be found in all areas of Worcester County. To date, there have been 40 laboratory confirmed rabid animals in the county, many of which had contact to pets and some even to people. Raccoons are the most frequently identified carrier of rabies in Worcester County, as well as in Maryland, but the deadly viral disease has also found here this year in foxes and in one opossum. Skunks, bats, cats and groundhogs are also considered rabies suspect and have been found in other years in the County. Cats with rabies serve as a reminder that the disease is not associated only with wild animals. They are the number one domestic animal species most likely to be unvaccinated and risk exposure to rabid wildlife while outside. The Health Department recommends several things you can do to protect your family and pets from exposure to this disease:

**C4CS 410-742-3460 • Core Service Agency 410-632-3366 • Isle of Wight Environmental Health 410-352-3234 / 410-641-9559  
Pocomoke 410-957-2005 • Berlin 410-629-0164 • Ocean City 410-289-4044 • Prevention 410-632-0056  
WACS Center 410-213-0202 / TTY 410-213-0202 • HANDS 410-213-7061**

- Have your dogs, cats, horses and ferrets vaccinated regularly and **keep those vaccinations current. (Especially outdoor cats).** If you don't know the expiration date of the vaccination, call your vet and ask.
- Do not let your pets roam free - they are more likely to have contact with a rabid wild animal.
- Avoid feeding your animals outside; this draws stray and wild animals to your doorstep. (If you must feed outdoors, do not leave the food out overnight and clean up any spillage.) Cover your garbage cans securely.
- Avoid sick animals and those acting in an unusual manner and teach your children not to approach wild animals and animals they don't know.
- If your pet has contact with a wild animal, avoid touching your pet with bare hands (wear gloves) and do not touch the wild animal. Report the incident immediately to the Health Department or your local police regarding testing of the wild animal and consult your veterinarian.

Maryland law requires all owners of dogs, cats and ferrets over three months of age to have their pets adequately vaccinated against rabies. Rabies vaccinations must be repeated every one to three years depending on the age of the pet and the type of vaccine used. In order to assist residents in keeping their pets currently vaccinated, the Worcester County Health Department and Worcester County Animal Control will offer rabies vaccination clinics on the following dates:

Stockton Fire Department	Wed., October 7, 2009	6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
At the intersection of Rt. 12 and Rt. 366		
Stockton, Maryland		

Showell Fire Department	Thurs., October 8, 2009	6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Rt. 575 (Old Rt. 113)		
Showell, Maryland		

- The cost is \$5.00 per vaccination.
- **If this is NOT your pets first rabies vaccination, WRITTEN PROOF OF THE PREVIOUS VACCINATION MUST BE PROVIDED** in order to receive a 3 year shot; otherwise a 1 year shot will be given.
- Dogs must be secured on a leash and under the control of an adult.
- Cats and ferrets must be in a carrier or box with air holes.

For further information regarding the clinics, please call 410-641-9559 or 410-632-1340 or go to our website: [www.worcesterhealth.org](http://www.worcesterhealth.org)