

News Release

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Sacramento County Public Health Warns Bats Test Positive for Rabies in Downtown Sacramento

Sacramento, Calif. – The Sacramento County Division of Public Health is advising residents and visitors that bats have recently tested positive in the area of the Golden 1 Center in the City of Sacramento. The bats were picked up on August 24, 2018 and tested at the Public Health Lab. All individuals that were exposed have been identified and prophylaxis has been recommended.

This region naturally has bats and they are beneficial to the environment, but they are also the most frequent carriers of rabies. It is important that if you see sick or dead bats or bats that are out during the day, do not touch them; instead, people should call 3-1-1 and report location.

The most common mode of rabies virus transmission is through a bite and the virus-containing saliva of an infected host. All species of mammals are susceptible to rabies virus infection. The rabies virus infects the central nervous system, ultimately causing disease in the brain. The early symptoms of rabies in people are similar to that of many other illnesses, including fever, headache, and general weakness or discomfort. Rabies in humans is preventable through vaccination.

Symptoms of rabies in animals can include lethargy, aggressiveness, change in behavior, and trouble walking. Residents in the area with pets should ensure their pet's rabies vaccination is up to date. It is important for all pet owners to vaccinate their pets for rabies.

“We have been in communication with the individuals having direct contact with the bats,” said Dr. Olivia Kasirye, Sacramento County Public Health Officer. “We want other residents and visitors of the downtown Sacramento area to be aware in case they came into contact with bats and to remind people of the importance of not touching sick or dead bats and ensuring their pets are vaccinated for rabies.”

Any Individuals who come into contact with sick or dead bats should contact their health care provider. For additional questions on rabies, the public can review the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/> or contact Sacramento County Public Health at 916-875-5881.

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