Aug. 31, 2016

HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE RABIES ALERT

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Malabar, FL – The Florida Department of Health in Brevard County issued a rabies alert for the Weber Road area. This is in response to a horse that tested positive on Aug. 30, 2016.

All residents and visitors in Brevard County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and domestic animals are at risk if not vaccinated. The public is asked to maintain a heightened awareness that rabies is active in Brevard County. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public, but they should not provide a false sense of security to areas that have not been named as under an alert.

The recent rabies alert is for 60 days. The center of the rabies alert is at 3255 Weber Road, Malabar, FL, and includes the following boundaries in Brevard County:

- I-95 to the west
- Corey Rd to the east
- Atz Rd to the north
- Valkaria Rd to the south

An animal with rabies could infect other wild or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure, will protect an exposed person from the disease.

Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Brevard County Animal Services at 321-633-2024.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood.
- **Do not** handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- **Never** adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Teach children **never** to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.

- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas, where they might come in contact with people and pets.
- Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Brevard County at 321-634-6337.

For further information on rabies, go to http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html or call the Florida Department of Health in Brevard County at 321-634-6337, or Brevard County Animal Services at 321-633-2024.

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