

General Guidelines for Management of Bat-Related Incidents at Children's Camps

Bats observed flying at night outside

- provide general education to all camp staff and camp attendees about bats and risk of rabies, avoiding exposures, and reporting possible exposures

Bat observed flying outside in daytime

- provide general education to all camp staff and camp attendees about bats and risk of rabies, avoiding exposures, and reporting possible exposures (note: if bat appears to be aggressively and deliberately swooping at people, keep campers away from area, capture bat, and submit for rabies testing)

Bat found outside grounded or roosting in camper accessible location

- restrict access to area
- temporarily contain bat, for example with an inverted pail or coffee can
- capture bat
- report incident to local health department
- submit bat for rabies testing

Bat flying in or roosting in camper-occupied building

Building large, no children are present unattended:

- evaluate situation for potential risk, consider exclusion and batproofing as soon as possible

Building small, leading to close proximity of bat to occupants, and children are present:

- leave one person in building to observe bat
- remove campers from building, as well as adults who will not be involved in capturing the bat
- make a list of building occupants while they exit the building or immediately afterwards
- capture bat
- report incident to local health department
- submit bat for rabies testing

Bat present indoors with sleeping adults or unattended children

- leave one person in building to observe bat
- remove campers from building, as well as adults who will not be involved in capturing the bat
- make a list of building occupants while they exit the building or immediately afterwards
- capture bat
- report incident to local health department
- submit bat for rabies testing

Known or suspected contact with a bat

- capture bat
- immediately make list of those with possible contact
- have those persons with possible contact wash the area of potential contact with soap and water
- report incident to local health department
- submit bat for rabies testing
- depending on severity, consider having wounds evaluated by health care provider for medical treatment

All bat-related incidents should be reported to the local health department.

For questions about handling incidents, or to immediately report those which may require rabies treatment, the local health department should be contacted. They have someone available 24 hours per day.

- For this camp, the name of the local health department is:
- Their business hours phone number is:
- Their off hours phone number is:

Instructions for use of bat capture kit:

- When an incident occurs, the person in this building who should be immediately notified to capture the bat is:
- and they can be reached by: (phone number, pager number, etc.)
- In this camp the bat capture kit is kept: (location)

If a bat is within arm's reach, the coffee can method should be used:

Carefully avoid direct contact with the bat and avoid damaging its head

To capture the bat:

- Close the windows, and the room and closet doors; turn on the lights if the room is dark;
- Wait for the bat to land.¹
- Wearing gloves, cover the bat with a coffee can (or similar container with a lid).
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the can, trapping the bat.
- With one hand firmly holding the cardboard in place against the top of the can, turn the can right side up.
- Replace the cardboard with the lid (if no lid, tape the cardboard tightly to the can.)
- Immediately contact your local health department to arrange for rabies examination of the bat.

If a bat is not within arm's reach, an extension pole with a net may be used to capture the bat:

- While wearing gloves, slowly approach the bat with net.
- Rotate the pole so that the bat is scooped into the net and the net turns in on itself containing the bat.
- With a gloved hand grab the bat through the outside of the net, slide the coffee can into the net, push the bat into the can, and place the lid on the can. (if no lid, tape a piece of cardboard over the can.)

- Immediately contact your local health department to arrange for rabies examination of the bat.
- ¹If a bat has landed behind something or in a space that is too narrow to cover with a coffee can, forceps may be used to capture it. Using a gloved hand to hold the forceps, firmly but gently grasp the bat under a wing and close to its body. Place the bat in the bottom of the coffee can and release your grip on the forceps. Cover the coffee can and contact the local health department as stated above.
In the event that four or more hours are needed before transportation of a bat for subsequent rabies testing occurs, the bat should be double-bagged in plastic and placed in a cooler or refrigerated area. Under no circumstances should a bat be stored in the same cooler or refrigerator as food or pharmaceuticals. The specimen should be kept away from potential contact with people or other animals.