



DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH- Linda Beers, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH PROMOTION &
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:

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Rabid gray fox in Mineville.

Elizabethtown, NY. The Essex County Health Department (ECHD) was notified Sunday afternoon, November 11, 2023 that an individual was attacked and bitten by a grey fox in Mineville. A NYS Department of Conservation (DEC) officer was called to the scene of the incident to retrieve the fox for rabies testing. The terminated animal was located with no further human, pet or livestock exposures.

The Health Department provided guidance for safe handling including transport to Ticonderoga Animal Hospital. The animal was prepared for rabies testing and shipped on Monday, November 13, 2023 to the NYSDOH Wadsworth Laboratory.

Results returned today, Tuesday, November 14, 2023 confirming the fox was positive for rabies. "The DEC Officer reported quills embedded in the fox's face accompanied by very aggressive behavior. This presentation and behavior is indicative of a probably rabid animal," noted Jessica Darney Buehler, Director of Health Planning & Promotion for ECHD. "Whenever possible, avoid wildlife acting overly friendly or aggressive. And know that quilled wildlife seeking contact can be considered highly suspected as rabid." She reminds residents and visitors that ECHD has staff on call during evenings, weekends and holidays to respond to events that pose an immediate threat to public health, including rabies exposures.

"All rabies post-exposure protocols were followed, and we don't expect any further risk to the public at this time," stated Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for ECHD. "The confirmation of this case highlights the need for continued vigilance and caution when encountering wild animals, particularly those displaying abnormal behavior." noted Beers. In 2023, 12 cases have been confirmed, including seven gray fox, two raccoons, two woodchuck and one bat.



**HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**
Public Health Unit

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To best protect people, pets, and livestock, ECHD recommends the following prevention actions:

- Keep pets and livestock up to date with rabies vaccinations;
- Attend pets when outside and feed pets inside;
- Tightly cap garbage cans, birdseed and other food sources to avoid attracting wild animals to your yard.

Those who have been exposed to saliva or brain tissue of a suspected rabid animal should:

- Wash all wounds thoroughly with soap and water;
- Seek medical attention immediately;
- Report animal bites or possible rabies exposures to ECHD 518-873-3500.

If your pet or livestock has contact with saliva or brain tissue of a suspected rabid animal, contact your veterinarian for medical care and contact ECHD to determine what additional follow-up may be needed.

Visit essexcountyny.gov/health for more information about rabies.

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