



Health Alert Network

Tri-County Health Department

Serving Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties

Phone 303/220-9200 • Fax 303/741-4173 • www.tchd.org

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John M. Douglas, Jr., M.D. Executive Director

The pages that follow contain information critical to protecting the health of your patients and the citizens of Colorado.

HAN ADVISORY

Number of pages including cover: 2

Subject: **Advisory - Message to Veterinarians regarding recent cases of Rabies**

Message ID: 5/13/2016 12:00:00 PM

Recipients: HAN Community Members.

From: TRI-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas County, Colorado

Recipient Instructions: **For your information. No response required.**

You have received this message based upon the information contained within our Health Alert Network Notification System. If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would like us to use, or if you have additional questions, call 720-200-1477.

Categories of Health Alert Network Messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Info Service/Public Health Brief: Provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.

You may download a copy of this HAN from the TCHD website at
<http://www.tchd.org/259/Health-Alert-Network>



Please share the following message with your staff:

Over the last two months, Tri-County Health Department has responded to four incidents involving skunks with confirmed or highly suspected rabies infection in urban areas of the city of Aurora. Three of the four incidents resulted in skunks potentially exposing both humans and pets to rabies. All people and pets have received appropriate follow up and treatment. Thus far in 2016, rabid skunks have been identified in urban areas of Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas and Jefferson counties. The geographic spread of skunk rabies westward through the Denver Metropolitan Area is unprecedented.

Public Health anticipates more incidents of contact between humans or domestic animals and rabid skunks in both rural and urban settings. Your office may be responding to calls or incidents represent a potential rabies exposure, which needs to be investigated promptly. Please follow these steps:

- 1) **Notify Tri-County Health Department at 303-220-9200 within 24 hours of any incident where a domestic animal (pet or livestock) might have had physical contact with a suspect rabid animal, including:**
 - Bites by rabies reservoir species (skunk, bat, fox or raccoon)
 - Biting animal is acting sick, abnormal or has symptoms suggestive of rabies
 - Biting domestic pet dies in quarantine
 - Bites by wild carnivores (bobcat, coyote, mountain lion, bear)
- 2) **Contact Tri-County Health Department prior to euthanasia if a domestic animal bit a person within the past 10 days and the pet owner is requesting euthanasia.**
- 3) **Actively reach out to clients with pets that are overdue on their rabies vaccinations and advise them to come in for a booster dose.**

In March 2016 the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians published an updated Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control, which can be found at www.nasphv.org/documentsCompendia.html. There are important changes for you to review regarding managing pets exposed to rabid animals.

If you have questions about rabies at any time or would like to request a training on the 2016 Rabies Compendium, please contact Tri-County Health Department at 303-220-9200.