

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**912.644.5217****Raccoon Tests Positive for Rabies**

**EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GA** – A raccoon that got into an altercation with a family dog in Guyton has tested positive for rabies and as a result, Effingham County Health Department officials remind residents to get all pets vaccinated. The dog was slightly behind on its rabies vaccination at the time of exposure to the raccoon but has received a rabies booster and will be under strict isolation for six months in accordance with the Georgia Rabies Control Manual.

Rabies is a potentially deadly virus that is primarily spread by infected animals. Residents should avoid contact with wild or stray animals, watch for unusual behavior in pets and wildlife, and get pets vaccinated against rabies.

The Effingham County Health Department offers these tips to protect you and your family from rabies:

- **Do not** handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or by leaving pet food out overnight.
- **Never** adopt wild animals or bring them into your home. Do not try to nurse sick animals to health. Call animal control or an animal rescue agency for assistance.
- Teach children to **never** handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly. “Love your own, leave other animals alone” is a good principle for children to learn.
- Keep vaccinations up to date for all dogs, cats, and ferrets. It’s the law and it’s an important protection for you and your pets.

Call Effingham County Animal Control at 754-2109 to report any animals showing suspicious behavior. Animal Control will work with the Effingham County Health Department to investigate possible cases of rabies. If an animal ever bites you, seek medical care immediately.

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