



# COUNTY OF YOLO

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## **Guidelines to Reduce Exposure to Rabies**

**(Woodland, CA)** – With the current shelter-in-place order, children and families are staying at home to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While the mild weather may encourage folks to go outside more frequently for walks, jogs, or bike rides, public health experts want to alert people that bat migration season has begun. Bat activity has increased, and so has the risk for rabies. The Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency would like to remind all Yolo County residents that the rabies virus is endemic in Yolo County, meaning it is always present - at higher levels in the spring and summer, and lower levels during other times of the year.

In Yolo County, bats are the animal most frequently reported with rabies. Rabies has also been detected in other wildlife such as skunks, raccoons, river otters, and foxes. To minimize exposure to rabies, Yolo County residents should follow these guidelines:

- Vaccinate dogs, cats, horses and other livestock for rabies and keep vaccinations current. Consultation on rabies vaccination is part of the comprehensive healthcare provided by your veterinarian.
- Report unusual animal behavior to Yolo County Animal Services at (530) 668-5287. Unusual animal behaviors include, but are not limited to, excessive drooling or foaming at the mouth, aggressive behaviors, and bats on the ground, unable to fly or active during daylight hours.
- Avoid contact with stray and wild animals.
- Keep pets under supervision in a yard or on a leash to minimize contact with wild animals.
- Teach children to never approach unfamiliar dogs, cats or wildlife, even if they appear friendly.
- Treat animal bites with soap and water and contact a medical professional immediately.
- People waking to find a bat in their room or a child's room should contact a medical professional immediately. Bats have small teeth and bites may not be visible.

“Vaccinations can keep pets, horses and livestock from getting rabies, and help protect pet owners should pets be bitten by a rabid wild animal,” said Yolo County Deputy Health Officer Dr. Mary Ann Limbos.

It's important to get animal vaccinations and to report animal bites to local animal control officials and to follow recommended quarantine guidelines. For additional information visit: <https://www.yolocountysheriff.com/services/animal-services/>.

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