



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Kill Date: 7/31/2008)

Livingston County, HOWELL, Michigan. July 21, 2008 (Livingston County Department of Public Health) – The Livingston County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) is advising area residents of steps to take if a bat enters your home. Since most human rabies cases in the United States have been caused by the rabies virus from bats, awareness of this information can help people protect themselves, their families, and their pets. If a bat is present in your home and you believe there has been human exposure or you have questions, contact your health care provider or LCDPH for recommendations for possible treatment exposure for rabies; for questions about pet exposure, contact your veterinarian or LCDPH. Use the following precautions to capture the bat safely. If you see a bat in your home and are certain that no human or pet exposure has occurred, confine the bat to a room by closing all doors and windows leading out of the room except those to the outside. The bat will probably leave soon. If not, it can be caught, as described below, and released outdoors away from people and pets.

If exposure to people, pets, or livestock has occurred, contact a Pest Control Service professional (look in the Yellow Pages). If professional help is unavailable, use the following precautions to safely capture the bat:

What you will need:

- leather work gloves (put them on)
- small box or coffee can
- piece of cardboard
- tape

When the bat lands, wearing the gloves, approach it slowly, placing the box or coffee can over it. Slide cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside. Tape the cardboard to the container securely. Contact LCDPH at (517) 552-6882 or Livingston County Animal Control at (517) 546-2154 to arrange for possible rabies testing.

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In Michigan, bats are the species most at risk for rabies infection, and of all the species of animals tested each year in the state, they are the most likely to be positive. In addition, sick bats are more likely to exhibit abnormal behavior, have an encounter with a human or another animal, and be submitted for rabies testing. Abnormal behaviors may include being active during the day, being found in a place where bats are not usually seen (such as inside a home), or inability to fly.

Additional information about rabies prevention can be obtained by contacting LCDPH at (517) 552-6882 or by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.

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