

## WILD ANIMALS PROHIBITED/RABIES

Wild animals can be a source of infections and should never be brought into schools or handled by children. Animal biting incidents are a concern especially from wild animals and wild mammals pose a risk for transmitting rabies. **NEVER TOUCH A WILD ANIMAL (Dead or Alive)!**

Immediately contact [Contra Costa County Animal Services](#) at (925) 335-8300 for safe removal of wild animals from the facility grounds. Notification should be made for the following wild animal and domestic animal groups:

- bats
- other mammals at higher risk of transmitting rabies (e.g., raccoons, skunks, and foxes)
- inherently dangerous animals (e.g., lions, tigers, cougars, and bears)
- aggressive or unpredictable animals, wild or domestic
- feral animals with unknown health and vaccination history

In addition, when a bat or other wild mammal at high risk of transmitting is found on the facility grounds make sure to contact Contra Costa Public Health, [Communicable Disease Programs](#), at (925) 313-6740 in a timely manner for communicable disease exposure assessment.

**RABIES** is a fatal, viral infection of animals and humans. Rabies can infect any mammal, but it is more common among certain mammals like bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes. Rabies can be spread to domestic animals and to humans through contact with an infected animal's saliva, usually through a bite or scratch, or through contact with its nervous tissues (brain and spinal cord). Rabies virus causes an infection of the brain, which is always fatal in those who are infected and do not receive protective treatment after an exposure. Wild mammals pose a risk for transmitting rabies and should never be brought into schools or handled by children.

### EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL-RELATED RABIES SITUATIONS

The following are specific instances where wild animals that are generally unacceptable for classroom settings (because of their risk of transmitting rabies and other zoonotic diseases), were brought into Contra Costa County schools:

- A second grade student brought a dead bat to school for show and tell. The teacher notified school administrators, who called Contra Costa Animal Services. The bat later tested positive for rabies, and the student had to undergo post-exposure treatment. Thanks to the teacher's quick response, no other students needed treatment.
- During elementary school recess, a playground aide noticed a crowd of children examining a sick bat, crawling on the blacktop. Animal Services was called. They collected the bat from the playground and submitted it for testing. Fortunately, the bat was negative for rabies. In the absence of that result, several children would have needed treatment for rabies exposure.

### RESOURCES

Contra Costa County - Communicable Disease Programs - (925) 313-6740

Guidelines (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/features/animalsinschools/>

Poster (Bat Conservation International):

[http://www.batcon.org/pdfs/rabies/Bat%20in%20School%20Notice\\_10r12\\_B\\_Color.pdf](http://www.batcon.org/pdfs/rabies/Bat%20in%20School%20Notice_10r12_B_Color.pdf)