



**IN THE NEWS**  
**LIVINGSTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

2 Murray Hill Drive - Mount Morris, New York - 14510  
Jennifer Rodriguez, M.S. - Public Health Director



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Rabies Positive Cat in the Town of Sparta, Livingston County**

**Mount Morris, NY, October 2, 2020** – According to Livingston County Public Health Director, Jennifer Rodriguez, the New York State Health Department laboratory has confirmed that a cat in the Town of Sparta tested positive for rabies on October 1, 2020. The cat, a feral kitten, was identified to have potentially come in contact with 16 persons prior to testing. These persons will now be subject to rabies post exposure treatment.

Rabies is a deadly virus that attacks the central nervous system in mammals. It is most often found in raccoons, skunks, and bats in Livingston County. All mammals, including unvaccinated dogs, cats, and farm animals are at risk for getting rabies. There is no way to tell if an animal is rabid just by looking at it. Wild or feral animals should always be avoided. Signs of rabies in wildlife can include:

- inability to walk
- appearance of “drunkenness”
- unwillingness to drink water or eat
- drooling
- aggressive behavior
- any significant change in temperament

### **All potential rabies exposures should be reported to the Livingston County Department of Health.**

Below are important steps you can follow to prevent rabies.

- Stay away from unfamiliar animals, either wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.
- Thoroughly wash any wound from an animal with soap and water and seek immediate medical attention.
- Avoid wild and feral animals, especially if the animal is showing any sign of rabies.
- Be a responsible pet owner by keeping your pet’s vaccinations current. Getting your pet vaccinated can help stop the spread of rabies from wild animals to humans.

New York State Law requires that all dogs, cats and ferrets have current rabies vaccinations beginning at 4 months of age. An unvaccinated pet that comes into contact with a rabid animal must be kept in strict confinement for six months or be euthanized. Free rabies clinics are offered for dogs, cats, and ferrets every year in Livingston County.

It is important to be aware of the facts and use caution to protect both your family and your pets. If you have any questions or would like further information on rabies or rabies vaccination clinics, please contact the Livingston County Department of Health at 243-7280 or visit [www.livingstoncounty.us/eh](http://www.livingstoncounty.us/eh).

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