

News Release

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Sacramento County Public Health In Search of Woman Possibly Exposed to a Rabies-Positive Bat at a Rancho Cordova Shopping Center

Sacramento, Calif. – The Sacramento County Division of Public Health is actively searching for a woman who handled a bat at a shopping center that tested positive for rabies. The woman turned the bat in at the Target store located at 10881 Olson Drive in Rancho Cordova, on the afternoon of Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2018.

It is crucial for anyone exposed to the rabies virus to receive prompt medical attention for possible prophylactic (anti-rabies) treatment.

If you know the identity or have any information regarding the person in the image, please immediately call the 24-hour Sacramento County Public Health phone number: 916-875-5881.



“We are actively investigating to find this individual that is suspected of having direct contact with the bat,” said Dr. Peter Beilenson, Sacramento County Health Services Director. “We want all Sacramento area residents to be aware that bats should not be touched, especially bats that appear sick, acting uncharacteristically – such as being out during the day – or dead bats. It’s also a very good reminder to ensure all pets are vaccinated for rabies.”

Our region naturally has bats and they are beneficial to the environment, but they are also the most frequent carriers of rabies. Last month, two bats were found in downtown Sacramento to be positive for rabies. It is important that if you see sick or dead bats or bats that are out during the day, do not touch them; instead, people should call 3-1-1 and report location.

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The most common mode of rabies virus transmission is through a bite and saliva of an infected host. All species of mammals are susceptible to rabies virus infection. The rabies virus infects the central nervous system, ultimately causing disease in the brain. The early symptoms of rabies in people are similar to that of many other illnesses, including fever, headache, and general weakness or discomfort. Rabies in humans is preventable through vaccination.

Symptoms of rabies in animals can include lethargy, aggressiveness, change in behavior, and trouble walking. Residents in the area with pets should ensure their pet's rabies vaccination is up to date. It is important for all pet owners to vaccinate their pets for rabies.

Any Individuals who come into contact with sick or dead bats should contact their health care provider for prompt follow-up.

For additional questions about rabies, the public can review the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/> or contact Sacramento County Public Health at 916-875-5881.

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