

GRAYSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



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Precautions to Avoid Rabies Exposure

The following information has been gathered from the Texas Department of State and Health Services (DSHS), and the Grayson County Health Department's Animal Control Division, and Infectious Disease Control Division.

The Grayson County Health Department is urging precautions to reduce the risk of contracting rabies. There has been a higher than usual number of animal rabies cases in Grayson County, Texas this year. Protect yourself by avoiding contact with wild animals and animals acting strangely, and by vaccinating your family pets.

The Grayson County area has seen a significant increase in animal rabies cases, particularly in skunks. As of April 9, 2015, Grayson County has had ten (10) skunks, and one (1) Heifer test positive for the rabies virus.

Bats and skunks are the most common animals found to have rabies in Texas. People can be exposed to rabies by an animal bite or scratch that breaks the skin or if an open wound comes in direct contact with an infected animal's saliva. People also can be exposed if the saliva from a rabid animal gets in a person's eyes, nose, or mouth.

The most effective ways to prevent exposure to rabies are:

- **Avoid feeding, touching or adopting wild animals, such as bats, skunks, raccoons, foxes, and coyotes,**
- **Report suspicious animals to local animal control,**
- **Vaccinate your family pets or livestock against rabies,**
- **Do not allow your domestic pets to roam at large,**
- **If you observe a skunk out during the day time contact the Grayson County Health Department's Animal Control Division at 903-465-2878 ext. 240, or the GCHD Emergency Phone at 903-821-5027**
- **If you are bitten, or if saliva from a suspected rabid animal comes in contact with your eyes, nose, mouth or a wound, wash the exposure site and seek medical attention immediately,**
- **Report any animal bite to the Sheriff's Office or Grayson County Animal Control Division.**

Rabies is almost always fatal in humans once symptoms occur. However, a series of post-exposure injections can be administered to prevent the development of rabies.