

# MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

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**TO:** City and County Health, Division of Animal and Plant Health, County EMA, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Law Enforcement, Maine Emergency Medical Services, Maine Animal Control Association, Division of Infectious Disease, Division of Public Health Systems, Municipal Offices, Regional Resource Centers

**FROM:** Dr. Siiri Bennett, State Epidemiologist

**SUBJECT:** Maine Animal Rabies 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Update – July 1-September 30, 2015

**DATE:** December 2, 2015

**TIME:**

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**Animal Rabies 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Update  
July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015**

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) provides quarterly updates on animal rabies to veterinarians and other animal health professionals. This update is for the third quarter of 2015 (July 1-September 30).

Animals are tested at the Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) following exposure to a human or domestic animal. USDA APHIS Wildlife Services performs supplemental surveillance for rabies in animals with no human or domestic animal exposure. Table 1 lists animals testing positive for rabies from HETL and USDA during the third quarter of 2015. Table 2 lists the number animals tested for rabies by county for the first three quarters of 2015. The number of rabid animals statewide may not be representative of the true incidence of animal rabies in Maine. See HETL's website for regularly updated counts at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/public-health-systems/health-and-environmental-testing/rabies/rabies2015.htm>. Figures 1 and 2 show additional animal rabies data for Maine.

Table 1. Animals positive for rabies virus during the third quarter of 2015 (N=13)

	Date tested	Species	Town	County	Lab
1	7/14/15	Fox, grey	Lisbon Falls	Androscoggin	HETL
2	7/15/15	Skunk	Topsfield	Washington	USDA
3	7/17/15	Bat, big brown	Auburn	Androscoggin	HETL
4	7/24/15	Skunk	Scarborough	Cumberland	HETL
5	8/03/15	Bat, big brown	Portland	Cumberland	HETL
6	8/06/15	Bat, big brown	Durham	Androscoggin	HETL
7	8/11/15	Raccoon	Bangor	Penobscot	HETL
8	8/11/15	Raccoon*	East Millinocket	Penobscot	USDA
9	8/18/15	Fox, grey	Monmouth	Kennebec	HETL
10	8/18/15	Raccoon*	East Millinocket	Penobscot	USDA
11	9/01/15	Skunk	Sebago	Cumberland	HETL
12	9/18/15	Bat, big brown	Sanford	York	HETL
13	9/24/15	Bat, big brown	Turner	Androscoggin	HETL

\*Confirmation pending from Federal CDC

Table 2. Animals tested for rabies by county, year-to-date (January 1-Sept. 30), HETL and USDA

County	# positive HETL	# positive USDA	# tested HETL	# tested USDA	% positive
Androscoggin	4	0	30	0	13.3%
Aroostook	0	0	5	174	0%
Cumberland	4	0	99	0	4.0%
Franklin	0	0	3	9	0%
Hancock	0	0	7	0	0%
Kennebec	6	0	63	0	9.5%
Knox	0	0	11	0	0%
Lincoln	0	0	6	0	0%
Oxford	0	0	15	0	0%
Penobscot	2	3	41	39	6.3%
Piscataquis	0	0	1	13	0%
Sagadahoc	0	0	18	0	0%
Somerset	3	0	11	7	16.7%

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Waldo	0	0	11	0	0%
Washington	0	2	8	18	7.7%
York	3	0	38	0	7.9%
Out of state (NH)	0	0	1	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>4.1%</b>

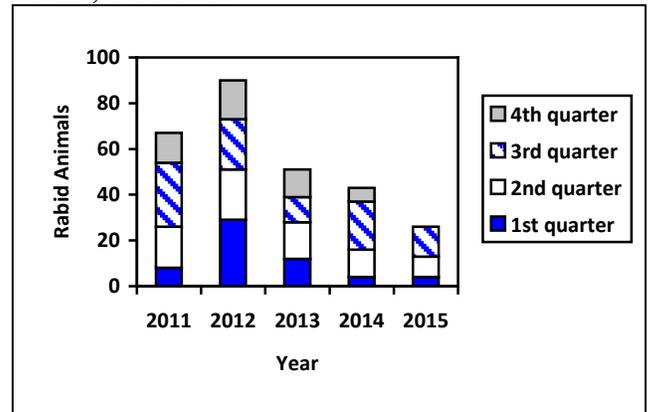
**Summary from this report:**

- In the third quarter of 2015, 13 animals tested positive for rabies. In 2014, there were 21 rabid animals in the third quarter. The 5-year median of animal rabies in the third quarter is 21.
- In 2015 year-to-date, 26 animals tested positive for rabies out of 628 total animals tested, for a percent positive of 4.1%. Last year, there were 37 rabid animals at this time out of 496 total animals tested, for a percent positive of 7.5%. Nationally, 6.2% of animals tested positive for rabies (2013 data).
- Only wild animals – raccoons (11), big brown bats (8), skunks (5), and gray foxes (2) – tested positive for rabies in 2015. Positive animals were from seven counties, including Androscoggin (4), Cumberland (3), Kennebec (6), Penobscot (5), Somerset (3), Washington (2), and York (3).

**Rabies Management:**

- Rabies is spread when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes from an infected animal’s saliva or neural (brain or spinal cord) tissue.
- Refer to the updated [Maine Rabies Management Guidelines 2012, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition](#) to assess exposures.
- Report possible human or domestic animal exposures to Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.
- Prompt recognition and reporting of exposures to medical professionals, public health, game wardens, and local animal control officers is critical to ensure appropriate medical and veterinary management.
- For more information, including on how to prevent exposures, see the Maine CDC rabies website at [www.mainepublichealth.gov/rabies](http://www.mainepublichealth.gov/rabies).

**Figure 1. Animal rabies by quarter and year in Maine, 2011-2015**



**Figure 2. Animal rabies by county in Maine, HETL and USDA, January 1-September 30, 2015**

