

Communications Office
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
10 Hospital Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391
www.pcchu.ca



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Protect Your Pet from Rabies: It's the Law

Health Unit and Local Veterinarians Holding City/County-wide Clinics on May 8

Tuesday, May 4, 2010, Peterborough

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit and local veterinarians are teaming up again this year to provide pet owners with low-cost rabies clinics across Peterborough City and County on Saturday, May 8 from 12 noon to 2 p.m.

"Protecting your cat or dog against rabies is not just a good idea, it's the law," said Tom Cathcart, Manager of Inspection Services who oversees the rabies prevention program for the Health Unit. "We hope that the community will take advantage of these low-cost rabies clinics because while it's rare, when humans contract rabies from infected animals it is 100% fatal if left untreated."

A case of rabies was recently reported by the Grey Bruce Health Unit, which announced on April 23, 2010 that a skunk from Southgate, Ontario had tested positive. In 2009, there were 50 confirmed animal rabies cases in Ontario, with 10 of these reported in central Ontario, including one case of the bat strain of rabies in Peterborough County.

It is the law that all cats and dogs over three months in Peterborough City and County must be vaccinated for rabies. Vaccinations protect pets from rabies and help protect your family if your pet is bitten by a rabid wild animal. A conviction for not having an animal properly vaccinated carries a \$110.00 fine per animal.

Rabies is a deadly disease of the central nervous system that affects humans and other mammals. The virus is concentrated in the saliva of a rabid animal and can spread through a bite, cut or scratch, or if the saliva comes in contact with the moist tissues of the mouth, nose or eyes. Rabies is fatal to animals and without the timely administration of treatment will cause death in humans. There is no known treatment for rabies once the symptoms appear.

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Bats and wild animals are the most common transmitters of rabies. High-risk animals include:

- raccoons
- foxes
- skunks
- woodchucks
- non-domesticated (wild) dogs

All animal bites or other cases of suspected rabies exposure must be reported to the Health Unit. The Health Unit investigates every report it receives to prevent and control the spread of the disease. In 2009, a total of 151 cases were investigated in the Peterborough city/county area.

You can prevent being infected with the rabies virus by remembering these tips:

- do not feed wild animals and stay at a safe distance when observing them
- supervise children and teach them not to approach or touch animals they do not know
- stay away from animals showing signs of rabies
- do not bring home wild animals
- if you suspect an animal is rabid, stay away from it and contact the local authorities
- if you have pets or livestock, make sure to vaccinate them against rabies
- seek medical advice/care for all animal bites or scratches

Clinics are taking place at the following locations. The cost for a rabies shot is only \$20 per animal, cash only.

APSLEY	Apsley Arena – Zamboni entrance
BUCKHORN	Harvey Township Garage
CAVAN	Peterborough West Animal Hospital 2605 Stewart Line
DOURO	Township Garage
DUMMER	Warsaw Township Firehall
ENNISMORE	Township Firehall
GALWAY	Firehall, Galway Rd. (15.00 per animal)
HAVELOCK	HBM Public Works Garage (6th line Belmont & Hwy 7)

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LAKEFIELD	Village Animal Hospital, 127 Queen St. Lakefield
NORWOOD	Norwood Veterinary Services (12 noon – 3:00 p.m.)
PETERBOROUGH	Champlain Animal Hospital, Highway 28 North Jackson Creek pet Services, 1140 Parkhill Rd. W. Parkhill Animal Hospital, 1535 Chemong Rd. Peterborough Pet Hospital, 379 Lansdowne St. E. Peterborough Veterinary Service, 720 The Kingsway

For further information about rabies of the upcoming clinics on May 8, please visit www.pcchu.ca/rabies or call 743-1000.

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For further information, please contact:

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