

# NEWS RELEASE

## Panhandle

Public Health District

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For immediate release.

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### **Protect yourself and your family from rabies**

As people take to the outdoors to enjoy the spring weather, Panhandle Public Health District urges caution when encountering unknown domestic or wild animals.

Skunks and bats are the main source of rabies in Nebraska and the United States. Domestic animals (cats, dogs and ferrets) make up less than 7 percent of all cases.

The risk of exposure to rabies is real, but the disease is preventable in both humans and domestic animals. Domestic pets and livestock can be infected from exposure to wildlife.

“Protect yourself and your family by vaccinating your dogs, cats, ferrets, horses, and valuable livestock against rabies. Booster vaccinations as directed are important to make sure they remain protected.” Stated PPHD Disease Surveillance Coordinator, Kendra Lauruhn, reinforcing the importance of rabies vaccinations.

Other tips to Protect yourself and your family from rabies include:

- If bitten by an animal, seek medical attention and report the bite to your local public health department or animal control authorities immediately.
- If your animal is bitten, contact your veterinarian for an appointment for the animal to be examined.
- Do not handle or feed wild animals. Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- If wild animals appear sick or injured, call animal control authorities or an animal rescue agency for assistance.
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community.