



## **St. Lawrence County Public Health Department**

80 State Highway 310, Suite 2 ▪ Canton, New York 13617-1476

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### **Press Release**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Oral Rabies Vaccine Airdrop for Wildlife Populations Will Begin in Early August**

**Canton, NY** — St. Lawrence County is preparing for its annual oral rabies vaccine (ORV) distribution, an essential initiative. ORV baits will be distributed by air throughout St. Lawrence County from August 2 through August 6. Bait distribution in New York is part of a nationwide, cooperative effort by USDA to prevent the westward spread of rabies in the eastern US. This will distribute approximately 622,800 oral rabies vaccine bait in the St. Lawrence Valley Region.

The bait (pictured below), which resembles a fast-food ketchup package, includes a vaccine wrapped in a plastic packet that is dipped in fish oil and coated with fish-meal crumbles to attract target wildlife. The vaccine has been proven safe when given to more than 60 species of mammals and birds.

Residents who come in contact with wildlife vaccine packets can call the NYSDOH Rabies Information Line (888) 574-6656 with questions or concerns.

- Do NOT disturb vaccine packets. Most packets are eaten within four days; almost all baits will be gone within a week. If packets are not found and eaten, they will harmlessly dissolve and the exposed vaccine will become inactivated. If you must move a vaccine packet, wear gloves or use a plastic bag or paper towel to pick it up. Place any damaged baits in the trash; throw intact baits into a wooded area or other raccoon/wildlife habitat.
- Residents should WASH HANDS IMMEDIATELY if they come into direct contact with the vaccine or packets, then call the NYSDOH Rabies Information Line at (888) 574-6656.
- Supervise children's outdoor activities during bait distribution and for one week afterward.
- Confine dogs and cats indoors and observe leash laws during the bait distribution interval and for one week afterward. This will increase the probability of wildlife vaccination and decrease the chance of pets finding the bait.
- Baits and vaccines are not harmful to domestic animals. However, an animal may vomit if it consumes several baits.
- Residents should not risk being bitten while trying to remove bait from your pet's mouth.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
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Always notify your medical provider or SLCPHD if you are bitten by a pet or a wild animal. Additionally, keep your pets up to date on their rabies vaccination, and make sure your home is bat proof.

SLCPHD will be hosting free rabies vaccination clinics throughout the remainder of the year.

The clinic dates and locations are listed at

<https://stlawco.gov/Departments/PublicHealth/RabiesControl>.



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