

March 8, 2024

## DOH-COLUMBIA ISSUES RABIES ALERT



**Contact:**

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**Columbia County, Fla.—** The Florida Department of Health in Columbia (DOH-Columbia) issued a rabies alert for parts of the Columbia County area. This is in response to a domestic dog that tested positive on March 5, 2024, and a raccoon that tested positive on February 29, 2024.

This rabies alert is for 60 days. The center of the first rabies alert is at the intersection of Highway 441 North and NE Rourks Glen, and includes the following boundaries in Columbia County:

- **North boundary to NE Christie Street**
- **West boundary to NW Falling Creek Road**
- **South boundary to the Five Points area**
- **East boundary to NE Gum Swamp Road**

The second rabies alert is located within the area of:

- **SW Sisters Welcome Road**
- **SR 247 Lake City area**
- **East of State Road 247**
- **West of Highway 47**

All residents and visitors in Columbia County should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats, and coyotes. Alerts are designed to increase awareness to the public. Please be aware that rabies activities can also occur outside the alert area.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after the exposure will protect an exposed person from the disease.

**Residents and visitors are advised to take the following precautions:**

- Keep your pets under direct supervision and on a leash so they do not come in contact with wild or stray animals. If an animal bites your pet, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact [Columbia County Animal Enforcement](#) at 386-758-3352.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals. Do not handle, feed, or unintentionally attract them with open garbage cans or litter.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood. Contact Columbia County Animal Enforcement at 863-758-3352.
- Immunize your pets based on your veterinarian's recommended schedule.
- Spay or neuter your pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets that may not be properly cared for or regularly vaccinated.

For more information on rabies, please visit [FloridaHealth.gov](#).

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