

Residents of Marion and Rochester

The Cape Cod Rabies Task Force, and the United States Department of Agriculture/Wildlife Services deployed their rabies vaccination program last week in the Town of Marion (Tuesday April 19,2016) and Rochester (Thursday April 21,2016). Rabies vaccine contained in baits was distributed in the towns in an area determined by the UDSA. The baits have a strong fish smell specifically attractive to raccoons and unpleasant to people. The vaccine is contained within a plastic packet that is sealed within the bait block.

Raccoons and wild animals such as fox and coyottes that consume the vaccine-bait are vaccinated against rabies. Vaccine containing baits are distributed from cars along roadsides in wooded, brush-covered, and wetland areas where raccoons are likely to find and eat them.

Doses of up to 75 times the amount of vaccine contained in one bait have been fed to raccoons and dogs with no ill effects. However, dogs that eat several of the fishmeal block baits may experience a temporary upset stomach. A number of dogs who have eaten the baits have been reported since the beginning of our efforts and no ill effects other than an occasional upset stomach have been reported.

Studies have shown that most baits are eaten within four days and most baits are gone in one week. If baits are not eaten they will dissolve, exposing the vaccine packet to sunlight and air, making the vaccine ineffective.

Since the baiting project is well over a week ago the majority of the baits should have been consumed by wildlife, but some baits may still be on the side of the road. The intact bait is safe for people to handle.

If you find a bait it should be thrown in brushy areas where people or pets are not likely to find it. Chewed baits should be picked up with a paper towel and placed in the trash.

If you have any questions about the bait program please contact Brian Bjorklund at the UDSA at 508 476-2715.

RABIES VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

VACCINE TO REDUCE RABIES IN WILDLIFE WILL BE DISTRIBUTED
FROM APRIL 18-MAY 24 IN:

PLYMOUTH, WAREHAM, KINGSTON, CARVER, MIDDLEBORO, ROCHESTER, MARION, BOURNE,
SANDWICH, FALMOUTH, MASHPEE, BARNSTABLE, YARMOUTH, & DENNIS

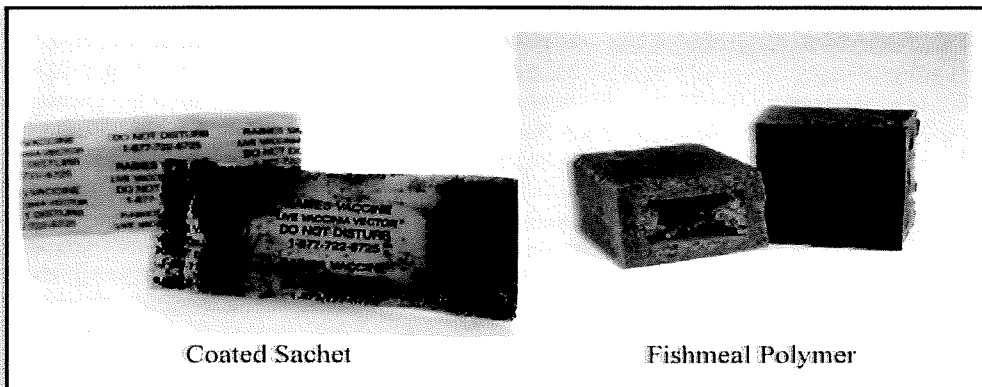
If you find a vaccine/bait package:

- USE A GLOVE OR A TOWEL TO PICK IT UP. Throw it into the woods where children and pets will not find it. If no suitable place is available, dispose of the bait in the trash.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling the vaccine/bait package.
- If your pet has eaten or had contact with a bait, please report the contact to: USDA Wildlife Services' MA/CT/RI Rabies Program Coordinator Brian Bjorklund at (508) 476-2956. The bait is not harmful to pets. We use this information to educate those distributing the baits that their baits may not have made it to their target destination.
- If you or another person has had contact with the liquid vaccine, wash the area thoroughly and call the Department of Public Health at (617) 983-6800.

Rabies is present in wildlife in all areas of Southeastern Massachusetts. Do not handle wildlife. If you should come into contact with wildlife, report it to your local animal control.

Make sure your cats, dogs and other pets have received their rabies vaccinations.

For more information on the Cape Cod Oral Rabies Vaccination Program call (508) 476-2956, stop by your Town Board of Health or visit <http://www.mass.gov/dph/rabies> or <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/rabies/>



Two types of oral rabies vaccination baits will be distributed: A sachet and a bait block. Both contain the same amount of vaccine.



367 ORV Bait Stations (similar to that pictured to the left) will be deployed throughout much of Southeastern MA. Each station will originally contain 60 ORV block baits and will be periodically checked over a three-week period.