

Bat Rabies Increase

As of 9/16/10, the Veterinary Public Health & Rabies Control Program has detected 15 rabid bats in Los Angeles County this year, with eight found in the Santa Clarita Valley. In most years, only about ten rabid bats are detected for the entire year. The only other year with a higher number of rabid bats detected was 2007 when 24 rabid bats were identified.

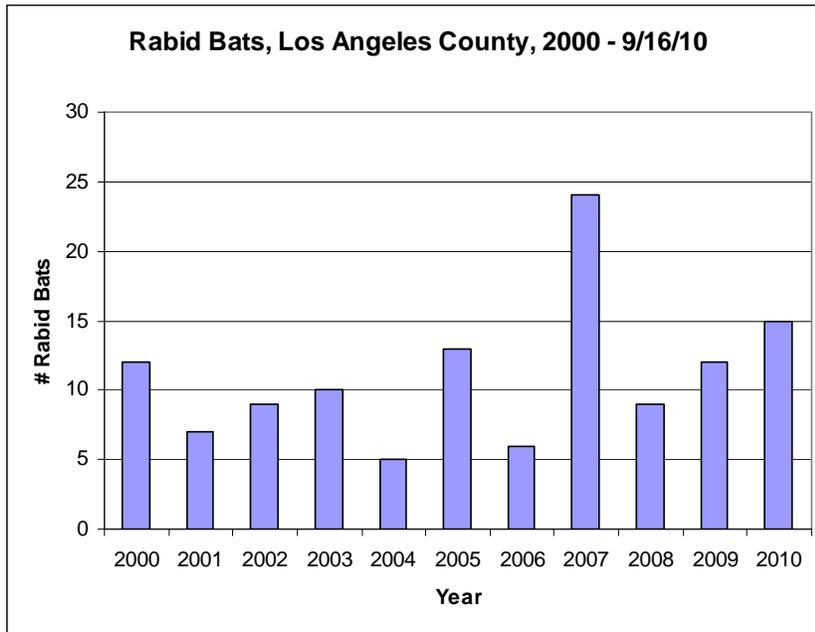
This year, most of the rabid bats were found in and around homes, and in two cases, dogs were found playing with the live bat. The pets were revaccinated against rabies and quarantine at home for 30 days. If the dogs had not been up to date on their rabies immunization, the owners would have been given the choice of either euthanizing the pet or placing in a strict quarantine for 6 months. Three of the bats were collected in public locations. Earlier in the year, rabid bats were found at a golf course and in a judge's chambers. This past Tuesday (9/14), a live bat was collected from the sidewalk in front of a store in a mall in Stevenson Ranch.



The public is reminded that rabies continually circulates in bats in our County. What can you do to reduce your rabies risk?

- Make sure your pet is up-to-date on its rabies vaccination. Contact your pet's veterinarian if you are not sure.
- Immediately consult with your physician if you are bitten by wildlife, to determine if you need rabies post-exposure treatment.
- Do not try to pet or directly handle any wildlife, especially bats.
- If a live bat is found on the ground around your home or in a public place, place a box over it and call your local animal control agency.
- If a bat is found in your home and it may have had access to pets or areas where people were sleeping, do not release it outside. If possible, put a small box or container over it, and call your local animal control agency.
- Report any animal bites or wildlife exposures to your pets to Veterinary Public Health & Rabies Control (213-989-7060).
- Note: In nature, fewer than 1 in 1000 to 10,000 bats are infected with rabies, but when a sick bat is found the risk is higher (approximately 10% test positive for rabies).

More Data on Rabid Bats in Los Angeles County



For more information, see: publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet/rabies.htm