

**COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY**

Commissioners

James R. Matthews

*Chairman*

Joseph M. Hoeffel    Bruce L. Castor, Jr.

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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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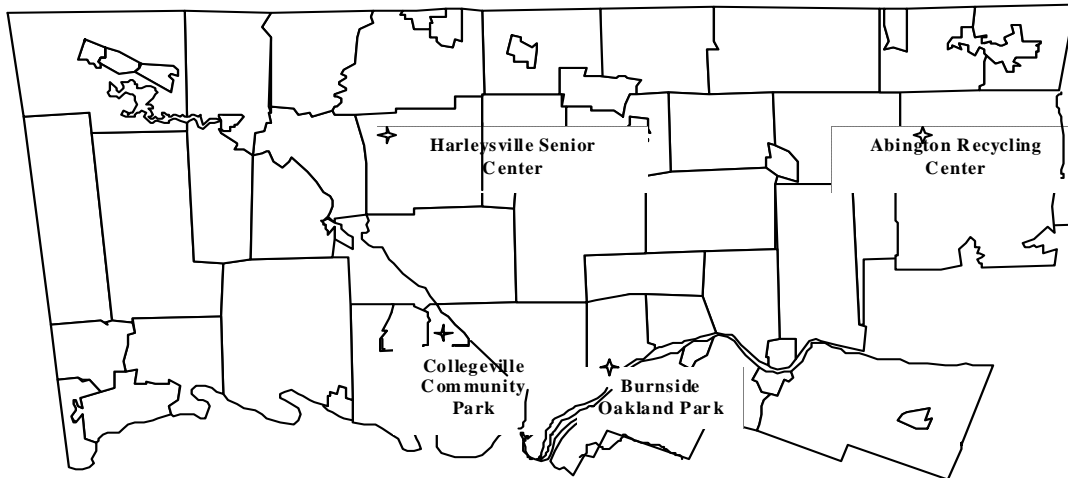
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For Immediate Release:

**Montgomery County Health Department Announces Rabies Clinic Dates**

**May 21, 2010 (Norristown, PA)** The Montgomery County Health Department will be conducting our annual **Low-Cost Rabies Immunization Clinics** every Saturday in June for the Nineteenth consecutive year. As in previous years, these clinics are located throughout the county in order to ensure that resident pet owners have access to this disease prevention service.



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**EASTERN COURT HOUSE ANNEX**

102 York Road, Suite 401

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## RABIES CLINIC LOCATIONS

- The 2010 Annual Rabies Clinic locations, dates and times are:

LOCATION	DATE	TIME
<b>Abington Recycling Center</b> Florey Lane (off of Easton Rd.) <b>Abington</b>	<b>June 5</b>	<b>9 AM – 11 AM</b>
<b>Collegeville Community Park</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> and Park Ave <b>Collegeville</b>	<b>June 12</b>	<b>9 AM – 11 AM</b>
<b>Harleysville Senior Ctr.</b> on Alumni Ave. (off of Main St) <b>Harleysville</b>	<b>June 19</b>	<b>9 AM – 11 AM</b>
<b>Burnside Oakland Park</b> Burnside Ave. and Oakland Drive <b>West Norriton</b>	<b>June 26</b>	<b>9 AM – 11 AM</b>

- **WHEN ARRIVING AT THE CLINIC, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL ANIMALS MUST BE LEASHED OR IN AN APPROVED CARRIER.**
  - **THE VACCINATION COST IS \$10.00 PER SHOT.**
- In 2009, 928 cats, dogs, and ferrets were vaccinated at five Rabies Clinic Sites in Montgomery County:

CLINIC SITE	2009
Abington	273
Collegeville	149
Harleysville	194
West Norriton	262
Pottstown	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>928</b>

- **For more information about MCHD's Animal Bite and Rabies Surveillance Program, please contact the Division of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, at (610) 278-5117.**

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The Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) would like to take this opportunity to discuss rabies and rabies vaccination. With the warm weather upon us, more residents will be outside with their pets walking or hiking on trails and in parks. These activities could place county residents at a higher risk of exposure to wild animals and/or stray domestic animals.

### **What is Rabies?**

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system. It can affect all mammals, including man. Rabies is a fatal disease once symptoms appear.

### **How is Rabies Spread?**

Rabies is spread most often through the bite of a rabid animal. It can also be spread through a scratch from a rabid animal that breaks the skin or through exposure of an open wound or mucous membrane (eye, nose or mouth) to saliva from a rabid animal. In Montgomery County rabies has been found in raccoons, bats, skunks, foxes, cats, and dogs.

### **All cats and dogs three months of age and older must be vaccinated against rabies. Pennsylvania State Law and the Montgomery County Public Health Code require this.**

Vaccinating domestic animals is an important way to prevent rabies transmission from wildlife animal reservoirs to the human population.

### **Many Montgomery County residents are not vaccinating their cats or dogs.**

When reviewing the 1,500 animal bites in Montgomery County reported to the Health Department in 2009, 1,051 were animal-to-human and 174 were animal-to-animal; 23% of cats and 7% of dogs involved in biting incidents were **unvaccinated** or not up-to-date on rabies vaccinations. Of the domestic animals involved in biting incidents that were unvaccinated or not up-to-date on their rabies vaccine in 2009, 56% were cats and 44% were dogs. Over the last five years, this proportion has remained relatively constant at approximately 60% cats and 40% dogs.

### **A dog or cat that is not current on its rabies vaccinations and has a wound of unknown origin must be quarantined for a period of six (6) months. This quarantine is completed in-home, but is monitored by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.**

In 2009, 275 pets were exposed to suspected rabid animals and were quarantined.

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**Animal rabies remains a problem. The number of animal rabies cases reported to the Health Department since 1996 are as follows:**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>ANIMAL RABIES CASES INVOLVING HUMAN OR DOMESTIC ANIMAL</b>	
1996	5	(4 raccoons; 1 bat)
1997	12	(7 raccoons; 1 skunk; 4 cats)
1998	10	(6 raccoons; 1 skunk; 2 bats; 1 cat)
1999	7	(1 raccoons; 2 skunk; 3 bats; 1 cats)
2000	14	(6 raccoons; 2 skunks; 2 bats; 1 cat; 1 dog; 1 groundhog; 1 fox)
2001	21	(8 raccoons; 7 skunks; 2 bats; 2 cats; 1 groundhog; 1 beaver)
2002	18	(9 raccoons; 6 skunks; 2 bats; 1 groundhog)
2003	8	(7 raccoons; 1 bat)
2004	19	(12 raccoons; 3 skunks; 2 bats; 2 cats)
2005	17	(8 raccoons; 5 skunks; 2 bats; 2 cats)
2006	10	(7 raccoons; 2 cats, 1 bat)
2007	11	(4 bats, 3 skunks, 2 raccoons, 1 groundhog, 1 steer)
2008	21	(8 skunks, 6 raccoons, 5 bats, 2 cats)
<b>2009</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>(10 raccoons, 2 skunks, 1 fox, 1 bat)</b>

**Currently in 2010, Montgomery County rabies cases reported to date are as follows:**

**Three positive** animal rabies cases in Montgomery County this year: **2 Raccoons**; West Pottsgrove Township (1), and Ambler Borough (1); **1 Skunk**; Upper Merion Township (1).

**The recommended precautions to prevent animal bites and possible rabies risk are:**

- Do not feed, befriend, handle, or try to make pets of wild animals or stray domestic animals.
- Vaccinate domestic dogs, cats, ferrets and selected livestock according to your veterinarian's recommendations.
- Obey animal control ordinances, particularly not allowing domestic animals to run at large.
- If bitten by a wild or domestic animal, immediately wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention from your doctor or hospital emergency room.
- After receiving appropriate medical care, contact the Health Department so that we can investigate whether post-exposure rabies injections are required and provide the appropriate recommendation to the physician.

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