



Erie County
Department of
Health



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

MEDIA RELEASE

July 29, 2021

CONTACT: Kara Kane, kara.kane@erie.gov or (716) 858-4941

RABIES VACCINE DISTRIBUTION BY AIR AND ON GROUND PLANNED FOR ERIE COUNTY

Oral rabies bait prevents deadly virus in skunks, raccoons, foxes and other wildlife

ERIE COUNTY, NY— In coordination with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services, the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) will participate in a wildlife vaccination program for rabies using aircraft and on-the-ground deliver to distribute bait.

Helicopters will drop bait to suburban towns and villages and open areas of the city of Buffalo from July 31 through August 4. Fixed wing aircraft will distribute vaccine packets to rural areas between August 17 and August 20. All distributions are weather-dependent. Ground and hand-baiting began on July 28 with Erie County Department of Health vector control staff and USDA personnel in more densely populated urban areas. In 2020, this program resulted in the distribution of more than 267,000 vaccine packets in Erie County.

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 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. Additional recommendations include:

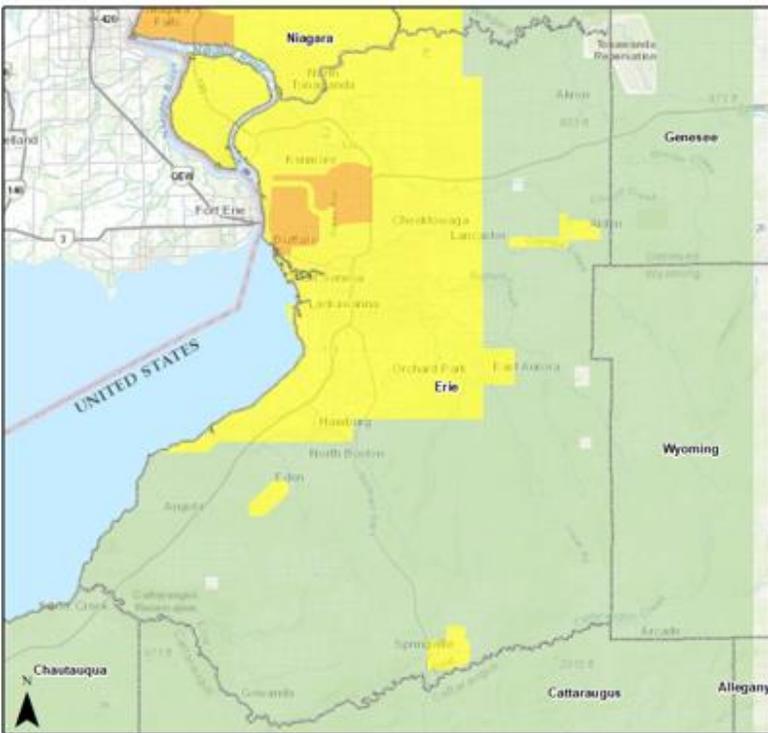
- Supervise children's outdoor activities during bait distribution and for one week afterward.
- Confine dogs and cats indoors and observe leash laws during the bait distribution interval and for one week afterward.
- This will increase the probability of raccoon vaccination and decrease the chance of pets finding the baits.
- 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.



Image of bait packet with quarter coin to indicate size; provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
2021 Jamestown, NY ORV Baiting by Method
Erie County

Image of Wildlife Rabies Vaccination Zones 2021



0 5 10 20 Km

2021 Oral Rabies Vaccine Zones

- Fixed Wing
- Rotary Wing
- Ground



USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services
 National Rabies Management Program
 59 Chenell Drive, Suite 2
 Concord, NH 03301

Coordinate System: North American Datum 83
 Date: 03/01/2021
 Data Source: USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services



Image of helicopter used for wildlife vaccine distribution, 2020.

#

ECDOH, Rabies Information: <https://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=rabies-information>

ECDOH, Environmental Health: 716-961-6800 (For emergencies after regular business hours: (716) 961-7898)

###