



**MERCER COUNTY  
CELINA CITY**  
*Health Department*  
**PREVENT • PROMOTE • PROTECT**



October 24, 2016

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

Mercer County Health Department  
Amber Mustard - Public Information Officer  
Amy Poor – Health Commissioner

### **Local Bat Tests Positive for Rabies Virus**

The Mercer County-Celina City Health Department was recently notified that a bat sent to the Ohio Department of Health Laboratory for testing was found to be infected with the Rabies virus. The Health Department sends several bats to the lab for testing each year. This usually occurs when someone finds a sick or dead bat, or a person or animal is bitten by a bat. In this case, the bat was taken to the health department by an eastern Mercer County resident whose cat had been bitten. No humans were exposed to the bat.

Although the risk of contracting rabies from a wild or domestic animal in our area is low, this recent discovery of rabies virus in the area serves as a reminder for residents to protect themselves and their pets against rabies. This is especially important because rabies is a serious disease, which usually results in death when it is contracted by mammals. For this reason, the Health Department encourages people to avoid contact with bats and other wild animals, especially if they appear to be sick or acting unusually, such as a nocturnal animal like a bat found outside during the day time. Dogs and cats should be vaccinated against rabies by a licensed Veterinarian. For more information on rabies, visit the health department website at <http://mccchd.org/environmental-health/animal-bite-rabies-protection/>, the Ohio Department of Health at: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/bid/zdp/diseases/rabies.aspx> or CDC at: <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>.

If you have any further questions you may contact the Health Department at 419-586-3251 M-F, 7:30 – 4:00 pm.

Board of Health Members CC: Diane Lefeld, Dr. Edward Hosbach, Ted Bertke, Jim Moran, Julie Fleck, Timothy Barman DVM and Janet Gels