



# Stark County Health Department



**Public Health**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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From: Kirk Norris, Health Commissioner

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## **Oral Rabies Vaccine (ORV) Drop Scheduled**

Stark County, Ohio –Last year’s four positive cases of raccoon rabies in Stark County still signify an immediate potential threat of Raccoon Rabies Variant (RRV) spread into new areas of eastern and central Ohio.

In addition, the Tuscarawas County Health Department received word from the Ohio Department of Agriculture on August 1, 2018, that a raccoon has been confirmed positive with Raccoon Rabies Variant (RRV) in Tuscarawas County.

As a result, the USDA will begin the Oral Rabies Vaccine (ORV) baiting in areas of Stark County from **August 19 through August 24<sup>th</sup>**. The oral bait will be dropped from fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. The area to be baited within Stark County includes: a line from the middle of Lake Township south to Pike Township and across to the eastern border of Stark County; also, because of the positive RRV in Tuscarawas County, a small portion of southern Stark County between Beach City and East Sparta will be included. Carroll, Columbiana and Tuscarawas counties are included in the bait drop area.

Please keep the following information in mind:

- Know what the baits look like: The bait consists of a polyvinyl chloride blister pack covered with a sweet-smelling dark green waxy coating.
- Instruct children to leave the baits alone.
- The baits are not harmful to pets. Once your area is baited, keep dogs and cats inside or on leashes for up to five days. Most baits disappear within 24 hours; however, it is important raccoons have every opportunity to eat them.
- Do not attempt to take bait away from your pet which may bite you.
- Anyone handling baits should wear gloves. If baits are found in areas frequented by pets or children, toss them into deeper cover. Damaged baits can be disposed of in the trash.
- If a person is exposed to the vaccine (liquid) within the bait, thoroughly wash any areas of the skin that came into contact with the vaccine with soap and water.

Rabies is a viral disease that affects mammals, including people. It is almost always fatal. Rabies vaccine baiting operations are intended to immunize raccoons that are at greatest risk of being exposed to raccoon rabies coming into the state. This will then create an “immune barrier” along the Ohio state line that can prevent the spread of raccoon-rabies variant into the rest of the state.

If you have any questions regarding the ORV bait drop please feel free to contact the Stark County Health Department at 330-493-9904 ext. 2008.

For additional information regarding rabies, visit the Stark County Health Department website and click on “Animal Bites/Rabies” in the A-Z index, or visit the Ohio Department of Health website and click on “Rabies” in the A-Z index.

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