

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
January 15, 2016

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**Kitten Found in Fargo Davies Parking Lot in November Tests Positive for Rabies:
*People Who May Have Kittens from Same Litter are Urged to Contact the
North Dakota Department of Health***

Fargo, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) and the State Veterinarian’s Office are requesting assistance from the public in locating kittens that were in or near the Fargo Davies High School parking lot around November 18, 2015. Anyone who may have knowledge of kittens is asked to call the NDDoH immediately.

A kitten found in the Fargo Davies High School parking lot in November recently developed illness and tested positive for rabies. When the kitten was originally found, it did not exhibit signs of rabies and would not have been contagious. Those who had contact with the kittens in the parking lot in November are not at risk for developing rabies. However, the kitten was likely exposed to the rabies virus prior to November 18, 2015, which means that other kittens in the same litter may have also been exposed and may become contagious if they develop the disease. A second kitten, which was found at the same time and in the same place, has been located and is currently being isolated.

The kittens were around 6 weeks of age and no further information regarding their origins is available. If there are additional kittens from this litter, they may have been exposed to the virus and will need to be examined by a veterinarian and isolated to ensure that they do not have rabies. People who may have information about additional kittens from this litter are asked to call the NDDoH Division of Disease Control at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378.

Rabies is a viral infection that affects mammals, including humans. The virus can be transmitted through saliva and through brain or nervous system tissue. It is most often transmitted through a bite from a rabid animal, but it can also be transmitted when a rabid animal’s saliva enters an open cut or wound, or mucous membranes (i.e., eyes, nose, or mouth). The virus causes swelling of the brain and is almost always fatal. Rabies can be prevented in humans after they are exposed by administering the rabies vaccine. Domestic animals infected with rabies, such as dogs, cats, and ferrets, are contagious for only a few days prior to onset of illness and eventual death.

For more information, please visit www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Rabies/ or contact the Division of Disease Control at 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378. For information regarding animals and rabies, contact Dr. Carlson, Deputy State Veterinarian, North Dakota Department of Agriculture, at 701.328.2655.

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.