



Bulletin No. 23  
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Rabies Alert  
Epidemic in Fox Population

**VACCINATE YOUR DOG(S)  
SUPPORT ANIMAL CONTROL EFFORTS**

A major epizootic (epidemic in animals) caused by rabies is occurring in foxes in rural Alaska. Rabies began to appear in foxes in early 1988 and spread has increased in recent months. Rabies has been documented in 18 animals in 1988. Of great concern is the increasing number of positive foxes in the Yukon-Kuskokwim area; there have been 4 rabid foxes detected in the Bethel city limits--3 since August.

**Villages with Rabid Foxes and Dogs  
1988**

Bethel (fox)	4
Kaktovik (fox)	2
Kasigluk (fox)	2
Kokhanak (fox)	1
Marshall (fox)	1
Nome (dog)	1
Nuiqsut (fox)	2
St. Marys (2 fox, 1 dog)	3
Wainwright (fox)	2

Elimination of rabies in wildlife has proved to be impossible. Rabies control depends on 1) vaccination of dogs and cats, and 2) aggressive efforts to control and eliminate strays and feral populations.

Rabies vaccination is available from your private veterinarian or, in rural communities, your lay vaccinator, Rabies Control Program, State of Alaska.

Rabies control measures are contained in Alaska regulations, 7 AAC 27.020 - 7 AAC 27.040. Key requirements include:

- All dogs and cats must be vaccinated.
- A standard Rabies Vaccination Certificate must be used.
- Sale of rabies vaccine is restricted to licensed veterinarians, veterinary biologic supply firms, and public agencies.
- The "Compendium of Animal Rabies Vaccines" of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians is adopted to govern use of rabies vaccine.
- Intrastate transportation of dogs and cats by public transportation requires proof of current rabies vaccination.
- Rabies vaccinations must be performed by licensed veterinarians or by individuals certified by the State of Alaska.

The Rabies Control Program provides consultation and free biologics for all persons under consideration for post-exposure rabies prophylaxis. The most important single step to prevent rabies in a person exposed is immediate, thorough cleansing of the wound. If indicated, biologics [Human Rabies Immune Globulin (HRIG) and Human Diploid Cell Vaccine (HDCV)] are provided free-of-charge by the Rabies Control Program, Section of Epidemiology.