

ZOONOSIS CONTROL

PUBLIC HEALTH REGION 11

FALL-QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

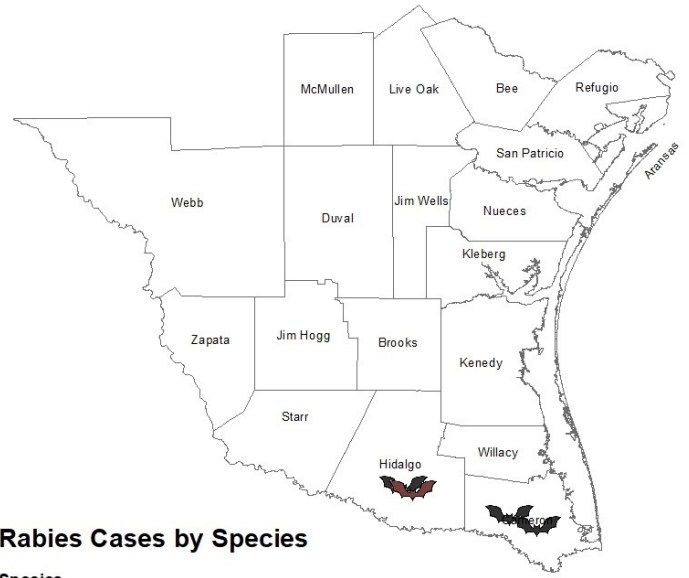
2023



SEPTEMBER

	2023	2022	2021
JANUARY	0	0	1
FEBRUARY	0	0	0
MARCH	0	1	1
APRIL	0	1	3
MAY	0	0	0
JUNE	2	0	0
JULY	1	0	0
AUGUST	0	1	2
SEPTEMBER	1	1	0
TOTAL	4	4	7

RABIES CASES



Rabies Cases by Species

- Species
-  Mexican free-tailed bat = 1
 -  Evening bat = 3

DSHS LABORATORY-CONFIRMED RABID ANIMALS PUBLIC HEALTH REGION 11- 2023

COUNTY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	TOTAL
CAMERON	0	0	0	0	0	BAT-1	BAT-1	0	0	2
HIDALGO	0	0	0	0	0	BAT-1	0	0	BAT-1	2
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	4

HALLOWEEN HOLIDAY HEALTH HAZARDS

Soon the candy-laden and trickster-oriented holiday of Halloween will arrive, and there are health hazards which are of concern for animals, particularly pets like dogs and cats. The "**Halloween Holiday Health Hazard For Animals**" fact sheet with tips on how to keep your pets safe is included on pages 7 and 8.



OUTDOOR SAFETY



Now that fall is here, more people will be looking forward to getting out of the house and enjoying the great outdoors. Anyone spending time outdoors should try to avoid ticks, fleas and mosquitoes. Hunters are especially vulnerable to these pests because they can spend hours sitting in a stand or on the ground waiting for game makes them an easy mark for ticks and mosquitoes. Body heat and exhaled carbon dioxide help guide these pests right to you. Cleaning or transporting larger game can result in exposure to ticks and fleas. As the animal's body temperature drops, these parasites will leave the game and move to you. Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants helps keep ticks away from your skin and mosquitoes from biting. Using a combination of insect repellents adds even more protection. DEET is an insect repellent that can be applied to clothing and also to skin. Permethrin, an insecticide, should only be applied to clothing. Applying it to your clothing and shoes the night before going to the field is a very effective deterrent against ticks. Both DEET and permethrin should be used in strict compliance with the label directions.

There are some zoonotic diseases such as anthrax and brucellosis that can be transmitted by handling sick animals. As a precaution, you should wear plastic or rubber gloves when cleaning your game. You should never shoot or eat animals that are obviously sick. You should never handle game found dead in the field.

If you have any questions concerning wildlife, vectors or zoonotic diseases, please contact us at (956) 444-3212. Additional information about hunters and disease risks is available at www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/health/zoonosis/outdoor/.



WHO'S YOUR LRCA?

The Rabies Control Act, Chapter 826 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, requires each County and municipality to designate a **Local Rabies Control Authority (LRCA)**. Persons that may be designated as the LRCA include the County health officer, a municipal health officer, an animal control officer, a peace officer, or any entity that the governing body considers appropriate.



The LRCA is responsible for enforcing laws pertaining to rabies control, which include Chapter 826, the rules for Rabies Control and Eradication in Chapter 169 of the Texas Administrative Code, and any rules established by the local municipality or County. All animal bites and other potential rabies exposures to a person must be reported to the LRCA, who in turn must investigate these potential exposures and suspected rabid animals. The LRCA must be familiar with laws pertaining to rabies as well as the requirements for animal rabies testing and quarantine. The LRCA makes sure that any high risk species that may have exposed someone to rabies is sent to the state laboratory for rabies testing. If a domestic dog, cat or ferret is responsible for the bite or other potential exposure, then the LRCA must ensure that the animal is captured and either properly quarantined for the required amount of time or euthanized and tested for rabies. The LRCA determines whether home confinement is allowed for dogs, cats or ferrets when certain conditions are met, and may also require that an animal that has inflicted multiple bite wounds be tested immediately. The LRCA has the final word regarding the disposition of a biting animal. Find out who your LRCA is and make sure that all animal bites and other potential rabies exposures are reported to this person. If no one has been appointed, talk to your local officials about finding someone who can do the job.



**WISHING YOU A
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**
From: The Zoo Crew
Dr. Tyler, Vaishnavi & Letty



2016 - 2023

Positive Mosquito Pools

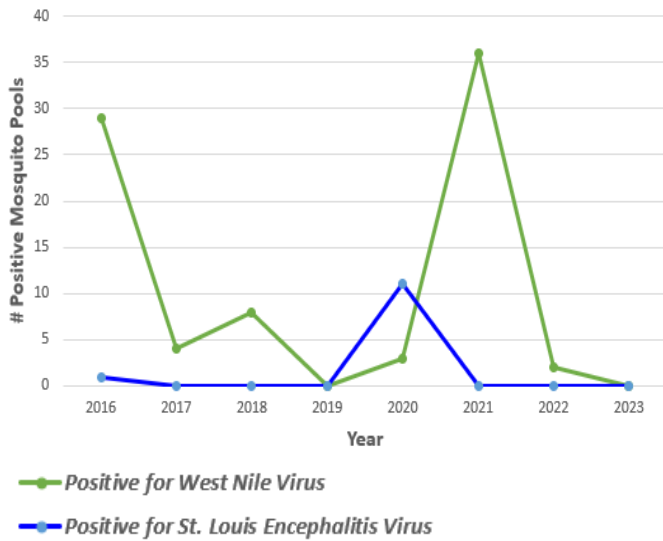
*no positives 2019



	2023		2022		2021		2020		2018		2017		2016	
	WNV	SLEV	WNV	SLEV	WNV	SLEV	WNV	SLEV	WNV	SLEV	WNV	SLEV	WNV	SLEV
JANUARY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEBRUARY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MARCH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APRIL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MAY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
JUNE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
JULY	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	10	1
AUGUST	0	0	0	0	19	0	1	6	1	0	0	0	9	0
SEPTEMBER	0	0	1	0	8	0	1	5	6	0	0	0	4	0
OCTOBER	—	—	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0
NOVEMBER	—	—	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
DECEMBER	—	—	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	—	—	2	0	36	0	3	11	8	0	4	0	29	1



Region 11
Positive Mosquito Pools 2016-2023



DSHS LABORATORY-CONFIRMED POSITIVE MOSQUITO POOLS

COUNTY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	TOTAL
CAMERON	0	0	0	0	0
KLEBERG	0	0	0	0	0
NUECES	0	0	0	0	0
WEBB	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0

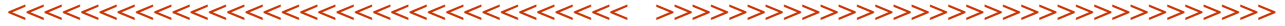
2023 Region 11 Positive Mosquito Pools

Saint Louis Encephalitis Virus - 0
 West Nile Virus - 0

Region 11
 Zoonosis Control
 901 W. Sesame Drive
 Harlingen, TX

HOLIDAY HEALTH HAZARDS

Now that the holiday season is near, there are additional health hazards which are of concern for animals; some are potentially fatal. The “**Winter and Holiday Health Hazards for Animals**” factsheet with tips on how to keep the season safe is included on page 9.



*Happy Holidays
and a
Prosperous New Year!*



*From the Zoo Crew:
Dr. Tyler, Vaishnavi and Letty*

Local Rabies Control Authority (LRCA) Training

Continuing Education provided by the Department of State Health Services
Region 11 Zoonosis Control

What: **Local Rabies Control Authority (LRCA) Training**

Who: The appointed **Local Rabies Control Authority** and/or **one LRCA representative** who are outlined in the Texas Health and Safety Code and Texas Administrative Code for protecting the public from rabies.

When: **Tuesday, November 3, 2023 from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

Where: Dick Kleberg Park Recreation Center
501 E. Escondido, Kingsville, Texas 78363

Animal Control Officers and Professional Sanitarians can earn up to 7 Continuing Education hours. There is no registration fee, but space is limited.

Registration deadline is **October 27, 2023**. For more information call: (956) 444-3212.

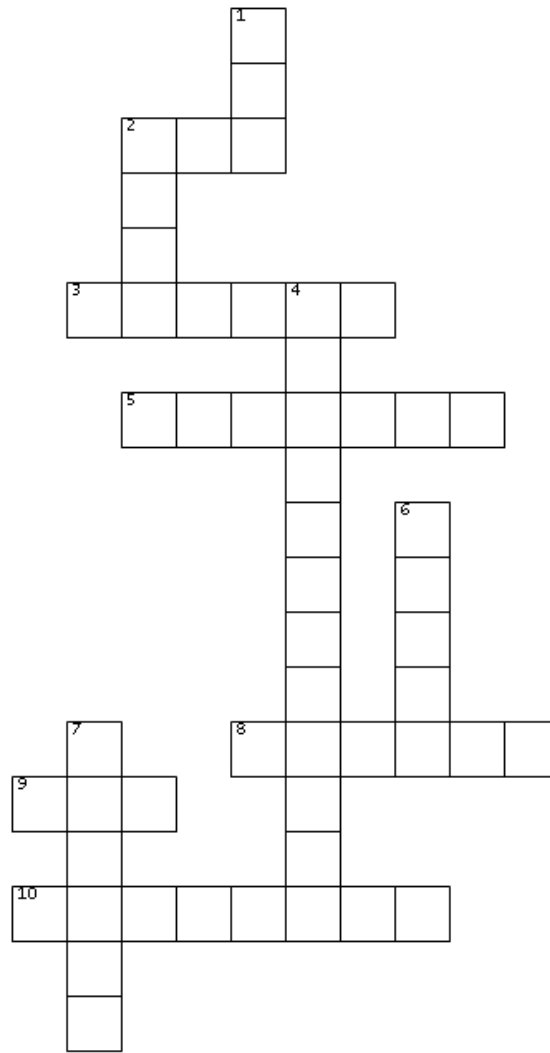
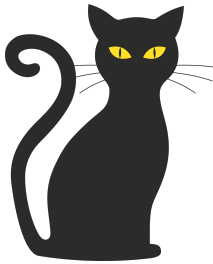
Please register via:

2023 LRCA Course Registration



<https://forms.office.com/r/1F2Nawdck7>

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 2. The only mammal capable of true sustainable flight, these small mammals live in caves and are high risk animals for transmitting rabies
- 3. A rare pet sometimes referred to as a domestic polecat is a carnivorous mammal and in the Mustelidae animal family
- 5. A nocturnal mammal in the Procyonidae family sometimes referred to as a trash panda
- 8. What you should never do to a live-bat on the ground with your bare-hands (two words)
- 9. A clever wild canid, but dangerous to humans as they are high risk animals for transmitting rabies
- 10. A disease which can be transmitted to humans from animals

DOWN

- 1. Your pet that is great at catching mice and knocking over glasses of water
- 2. The most common way the rabies virus is transmitted
- 4. Inflammation of the brain
- 6. A smelly wild mustelid wild animal that are dangerous to domestic animals and people as they are high risk animals for transmitting rabies
- 7. A wild canid that is closely related to the wolf, but smaller. These wild canids are dangerous to pets and humans as they are high risk animals for transmitting rabies

HALLOWEEN HOLIDAY HEALTH HAZARDS FOR ANIMALS

Texas Department of State Health Services, Zoonosis Control
Submitted by Pamela Wilson, DrCH, MEd, LVT, MCHES

With the arrival of the candy-laden and trickster-oriented holiday of Halloween, there are some risks and health hazards that are of concern for animals, particularly pets like dogs and cats. To avoid unfortunate mishaps and tragedies, keep in mind the following tips:

With the excitement of strangers ringing doorbells in hopes of receiving a treat, pets can become nervous and might escape from the safety of their home. Loud or unfamiliar noises created by pranksters or party-goers can also be unsettling for pets and may encourage them to try to escape the vicinity. Be sure that your pet is wearing a collar with an identification tag on it for easy tracing. Another good tracking device is an identification microchip; check with your veterinarian or local animal shelter on how to get this procedure done on your pet. To prevent an escape on the part of any pets, keep them confined in a part of the house separate from Halloween party or trick-or-treat activities.

With busier street and sidewalk holiday traffic, an extra precaution if you walk your dog at night is to add reflective collars and tags or a leash with flashing lights to increase the visibility of you and your pet. It's also not advisable to take pets along for trick-or-treating. If you opt to do so, the pet should be trained and kept on a leash under the control of an adult.

Being in the midst of the hustle and bustle of holiday activities could provoke even well-tempered animals to bite. Keep your pets out of situations that could be stress evoking for them. Even if your city or county does not have a leash law, Halloween is a good time to keep your outdoor dogs confined safely and comfortably in the back yard to prevent any mishaps or accidents when costumed strangers approach for tricks or treats. As with any time of the year, make sure that your pet is up to date on its rabies vaccination. By law, dogs and cats in Texas are required to be vaccinated against rabies by a veterinarian. Rabies vaccination is also recommended for any animals that are in close contact with people, such as ferrets and wolf-dog hybrids, plus horses and other livestock.

A popular treat kept on hand for trick-or-treaters or brought back to the house after a successful Halloween outing in search of treats is chocolate. Ingestion of chocolate can produce toxicity in animals. Dogs in particular are attracted to the sweet treats. The extent of toxicity an animal exhibits after consuming chocolate is based on a variety of factors, such as the type of chocolate ingested, the size of the animal, or an animal's individual sensitivity to chocolate. Baker's or baking chocolate is the form of chocolate that contains a higher concentration of stimulant (theobromine) than either semi-sweet or regular milk chocolate. Some typical clinical signs of chocolate toxicity include excessive excitability, restlessness, increased heart rate, muscle tremors and seizures, vomiting, and diarrhea. The last two clinical signs may be transiently present due to an animal consuming any amount of chocolate (i.e., any ingestion of chocolate may cause gastrointestinal upset, but not extensive toxicity). Severe reactions may result in coma. The literature gives a wide range of toxic levels, so a veterinarian should be consulted immediately to discuss the appropriate action to be taken if an animal has consumed chocolate. There is no specific antidote for chocolate toxicity. Animals can be treated by a veterinarian to address any clinical signs they are exhibiting; vomiting may be induced within 2 hours of the chocolate consumption depending on the amount ingested and other factors.

Another dangerous substance associated with sweet treats is xylitol. Xylitol is among a group of sugar substitutes classified as sugar alcohols ([somewhat a misnomer as they are not alcoholic](#)); it might be found in some “sugar-free,” “reduced-sugar,” or “diet” foods such as gum, candy, baked goods, ice cream, and peanut butter.^{1,2} [Look for the term “xylitol” or the general term “sugar alcohol” on food labels when checking for ingredients.](#) In dogs, even a small amount of xylitol can cause toxic effects; it can also be fatal. If a dog consumes xylitol, it can cause hypoglycemia (sudden decrease in blood glucose) and/or liver failure. If you suspect that your dog has eaten a product containing xylitol, you should take it to a veterinarian immediately, as signs of toxicity can start within 30 minutes of ingestion (signs could also be delayed for a few days). Some of the clinical signs of xylitol toxicity in dogs include weakness, lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle tremors, seizures, anemia, increased thirst, increased urination, and bloody or tarry feces. There have been some indications that ferrets may react to xylitol in the same way that dogs do. Cats may also exhibit some of these clinical signs if they ingest xylitol; however, xylitol poisoning in cats appears to be rare, possibly because they may metabolize it differently or because they typically are not interested in eating food products that contain this substance.

When trick-or-treaters start making their appointed rounds, jewelry that glows in the dark is popular to wear as a safety feature; it can help make a person more visible. It can also be a popular attractant as a play item for cats. Glow jewelry contains a chemical called dibutyl phthalate.³ Although this chemical may have the potential to cause death via respiratory paralysis, pets generally will only ingest a minimal amount due to its unpleasant taste and the fact that only a small amount of the chemical is present in the jewelry. Pets that have bitten into the jewelry may exhibit heavy salivation, hyperactivity, and aggressive behavior, but they typically recover within minutes. Immediately after a pet happens to ingest this chemical, it helps to feed it small quantities of milk, canned food, or tuna juice to dilute the chemical in its mouth. Wash off any drops of the chemical that might be on the pet’s coat and flush the pet’s eyes with water if there has been ocular exposure. There is no known antidote for dibutyl phthalate; pets that have ingested large quantities should be closely monitored and given supportive treatment if warranted.

If you know or suspect that an animal has ingested anything that could possibly produce toxicity, immediately consult a veterinarian, animal emergency clinic, or poison control center. The **Texas Poison Center Network** can be reached at **1-800-222-1222**. The **ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center** can be reached at **1-800-548-2423**.

Halloween is a holiday that tends to bring out the mischievous nature of people, sometimes to the point of them becoming malicious. Animals can become the unfortunate targets of malevolent acts, so be sure to keep them in comfortable, safe, secured locations. Cats tend to be more at risk, so keep them inside. Black cats (due to the folklore associating them with bad luck, witchcraft, and Halloween), calicos, and tortoiseshells (due to their Halloween colors) may have more of a chance of being targeted.

With the fall, temperatures begin to drop and cold winds start to blow. The U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s *Animal Welfare Act* recommends that the ambient temperature should not drop below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, especially when sick, aged, or young animals are present. If it does, plan to supplement the animal’s environment with auxiliary heating and additional bedding. Additionally, animals should always be provided with adequate protection and shelter from the direct effect of wind, rain, or snow. Remember, animals in Texas are not acclimated to cold weather, so they must be protected from extreme weather conditions.

WINTER AND HOLIDAY HEALTH HAZARDS FOR ANIMALS

Texas Department of State Health Services, Zoonosis Control

Submitted by Pam Wilson, DrCH, MEd, LVT, MCHES

With the arrival of the winter months and holiday season, there are additional health hazards that are of concern for animals; some are potentially fatal. A few of these health risks could be brought into the home inadvertently, there-by increasing a pet's possibility of exposure. To keep the season safe, protect animals from contact with or ingestion of the following:

1. **Antifreeze** - this mixture contains ethylene glycol, a product that can cause lethal kidney failure and metabolic acidosis (accumulation of acid in the blood and body tissues) if ingested. It has a sweet taste that attracts animals and can be toxic in small doses (i.e. 1-2 tablespoons can produce toxicity in a medium-sized dog). Antifreeze can be toxic even when diluted in water.

At least one brand of antifreeze is available that uses propylene glycol for the active component as an alternative to ethylene glycol. Larger quantities of the propylene glycol-based antifreeze usually have to be swallowed to produce toxicity as compared to ethylene glycol-based antifreeze. Additionally, propylene glycol-based antifreeze does not metabolize in the animal's system to form products that cause kidney damage; however, it can still cause illness and death via metabolic acidosis.

An antidote is available for antifreeze poisoning, but early recognition of ingestion and immediate intensive treatment are imperative for the survival of the animal. The best medicine, though, is to prevent animals from being in contact with this toxic substance by having antifreeze changed by a professional who knows how to properly dispose of it. If individuals change their own antifreeze, they should not drain it into the sewer or leave it setting out in a pan for any amount of time (all it takes is a few seconds for an animal to ingest it). Some snow globes may contain this product, so keep them out of reach from your pets.

2. **Mistletoe** - the berry of this plant is the most toxic component, especially if it is chewed instead of swallowed whole. If the berry is ingested in sufficient quantity, it can cause gastrointestinal and neurological signs, including convulsions.

3. **Poinsettia** - whether this plant is toxic has been debated for years. The most recent findings are that it contains no toxic chemical. However, as with any plant that an animal is not accustomed to eating, it can cause diarrhea and vomiting (a protective mechanism to eliminate the foreign substance). Animals tend to be attracted to poinsettias, so it is a good practice to keep these plants out of their reach.

4. **Holly** - the red berries on the holly plant, if consumed in large amounts, may cause gastrointestinal signs such as vomiting and diarrhea. These clinical signs can lead to dehydration, which may need to be treated with injectable fluids.

5. **Ivy** - this plant is not acutely toxic, but it can cause gastrointestinal upset if ingested.

6. **Christmas cactus** - this plant is nontoxic, but it can cause vomiting and transient diarrhea if consumed.

7. **Tinsel** - cats in particular are attracted to playing with Christmas tree tinsel. If ingested, it can cause an intestinal blockage or intussusception (prolapsing of one part of the intestine into the cavity of an immediately adjoining part). If indoor cats are present, it would be prudent to avoid using strands of tinsel. It would also be advisable to place breakable ornaments at the top of the tree. An investment in shatterproof ornaments might also be worthwhile.

¹Food and Drug Administration. Paws off xylitol; it's dangerous for dogs: <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/paws-xylitol-its-dangerous-dogs>

²Mayo Clinic Staff. Artificial sweeteners and other sugar substitutes:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/artificial-sweeteners/art-20046936>

³Rosendale ME. Glow jewelry (dibutyl phthalate) ingestion in cats: <https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/shelter-health-poison-control/unpalatable-lure-glow-jewelry> or *Veterinary Medicine* 1999;August:703.

Additional information and resources are available at:

Wilson PJ. <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/8-tips-to-keep-your-pet-safe-from-winter-and-holiday-hazards>

Wilson PJ. *Puppy Pal Pointers: From the True Tails of Ripple and Jessie*, AuthorHouse: Bloomington, IN (2005)