



BURLINGTON COUNTY
NJLINCS-HAN



Public Health
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New Jersey Local Information Network Communications System Health Alert Network
Surveillance • Reporting • Communications • Response

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(BCHD12-313) Burlington County Health Department Info – Handling of Captured Bats

The Burlington County Health Department has become aware of recent responses involving bats in private homes. In at least one case, proper handling and capture procedures were not followed and incorrect information was conveyed to residents, resulting in individuals having to receive post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) that might have not been necessary if the bats could have been tested for rabies.

To preclude any further incidents such as this, please review the following information on responding to calls regarding bats in private homes.

1. When there is a possibility that someone in the home has been exposed, do not release the bat. It must be captured and tested for rabies. Put on leather work gloves before starting the capture.
2. Use a small box, coffee can or Tupperware-type container for the capture. If the bat is alive, punch small holes in the container so the bat can breathe.
3. If the bat is killed in the process of trying to capture it, try to preserve its head (the brain is used for testing). Keep the bat refrigerated or on ice until it can be transported to the Animal Shelter.
4. After capturing the bat, transport it to the Burlington County Animal Shelter, 35 Academy Drive, Westampton, NJ.

Testing a bat for rabies can not only save someone's life but it can save an exposed individual anxiety, time and money if the bat tests negative for rabies.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact either the Burlington County Animal Shelter at (609) 265-5073 or the Burlington County Health Department Environmental Office at (609) 265-5523 or (609) 265-5575.