

IMS Form 201

INCIDENT BRIEFING	1. Incident Name	2. Date/Time Prepared	3. Operational Period
	Rabies Outbreak 2016 – Update #005	Updated 07 Sept 2017	Dec 2015 to date.

4. Background

In December 2015 a confirmed case of rabies was detected in a raccoon from the Hamilton area. Within a short period of time an additional 12 cases were confirmed. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry believes the rogue raccoon hitchhiked its way into the province, possibly on the back of a tractor trailer from New York State. Since 2008 Ontario had been declared free from the raccoon strain of rabies.

On March 23rd, 2016 there were 70 cases of raccoon rabies and 1 case of fox rabies. As of July 6th, 2016 were 141 confirmed cases of raccoon strain rabies associated with this outbreak. The cases have been clustered around Hamilton and the two cases of the arctic fox strain of rabies are in Perth County.

On November 2nd, 2016 the Ontario Animal Health Network reported that the number of confirmed Raccoon strain rabies cases has increased to 234 in addition to the 2 confirmed Fox strain rabies cases. The surveillance area established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests has now been expanded to include a small portion of East Garafraxa.

On January 20th, 2017 the total number of confirmed rabies cases in Ontario is 271 (266 raccoon strain and 5 fox strain). 1 case of fox strain rabies has been confirmed in a cow in Perth. The MNRF Enhanced Surveillance Zone has expanded to include the western edges of East Garafraxa and Grand Valley including the Luther Marsh area.

On April 11th, 2017 local media reported “WDGPH issues rabies warning for Dufferin County”. The article provided details from a Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health spokesperson and information for the public to follow should they suspect that they may have come into contact with an infected animal.

On June 28th, 2017 the Ministry of Natural Resources reported that 340 confirmed cases of rabies were related to this current outbreak. The animals infected include raccoons, skunks, cats, fox, cattle and llama.

On July 1st, 2017 a constable with the Shelburne Police Service euthanized a raccoon around mid-day. The animal appeared disoriented, had loss of coordination and showed no fear of humans or dogs. Given the close proximity to a park and with an obvious concern for public safety the animal was euthanized.

Beginning on 01 July 2017 animal owners who call OMAFRA directly concerning potential rabies exposures will be advised to contact a local veterinarian.

NOTE: Under the [Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act, Regulation 567](#), pet owners are legally required to keep dogs and cats over three months old vaccinated for rabies in 31 of the 36 Public Health Units in the province (i.e. all but the 5 northern-most units).

NOTE: Under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act, Regulation 567](#), livestock owners are legally required to have horses, cattle and sheep vaccinated for rabies in certain public health units in Ontario, if the animals have contact with anyone other than their regular caretakers (e.g. horses that go to competitions, livestock that go to fairs).

Unlike many diseases winter weather has little effect on mitigating the outbreak as the virus can survive freezing and remains contagious when frozen.

People who have come into contact with the liquid vaccine in a bait, should call their family physician as a precaution. The liquid vaccine does not normally pose a threat but could be of risk to immunocompromised individuals.

All strains of rabies are dangerous. At present, there is no proof that any one strain is more dangerous to humans than another. The most common strain to kill humans in North America is the bat strain.

5. Current Situation

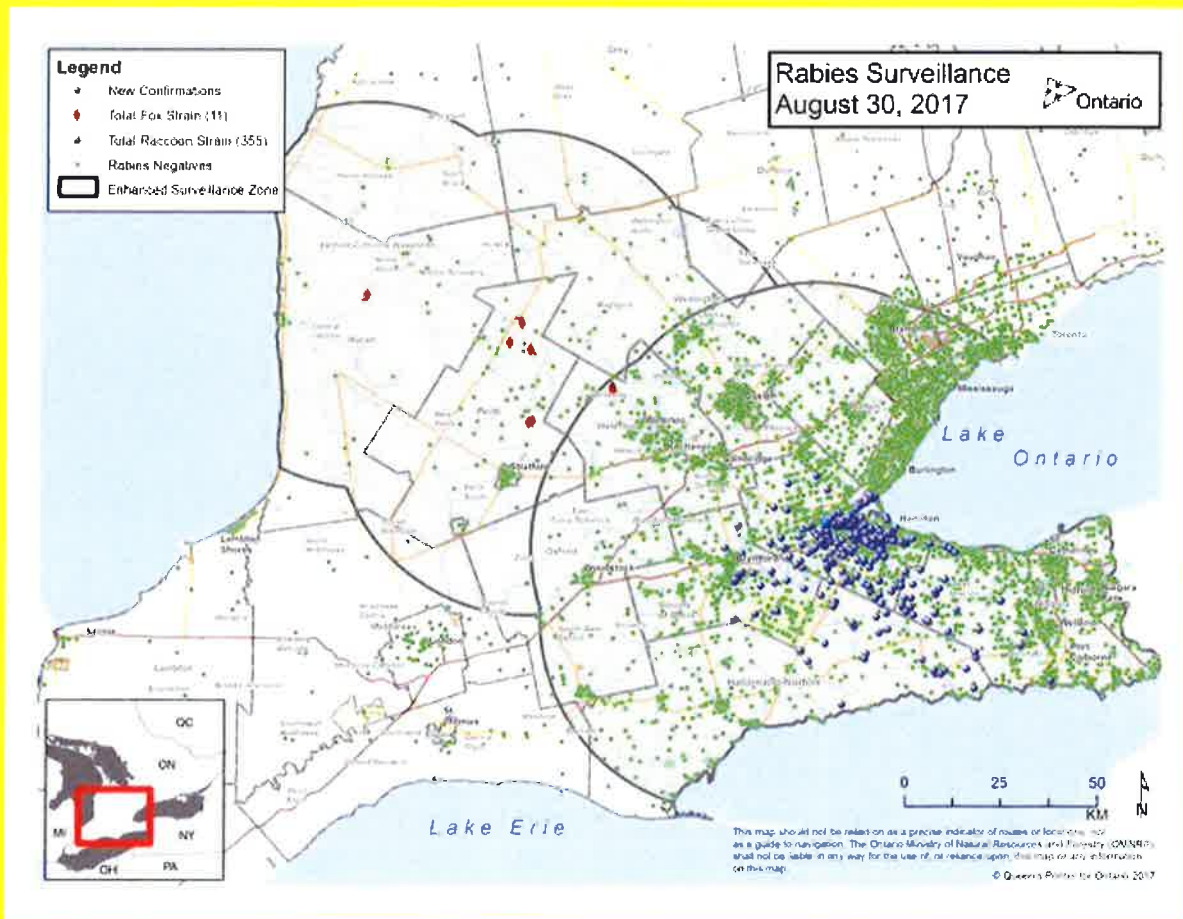
On August 25th, 2017 Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health confirmed that a dead bat found in Guelph had tested positive for rabies. The bat was discovered by an unvaccinated dog that had the carcass in its mouth. The dog has been quarantined for 90 days.

As of 07 September 2017 MNRF had not revised the surveillance zone despite the positive test in Guelph.

The most current Rabies Control Zone map can be found at this link:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/inspection/ahw/rabieszone.htm>

Information about Rabies in wildlife and MNRFs vaccine baiting program can be found at this link:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rabies-wildlife#section-5>

6. Map (sketch, GIS image, or description of Incident area)



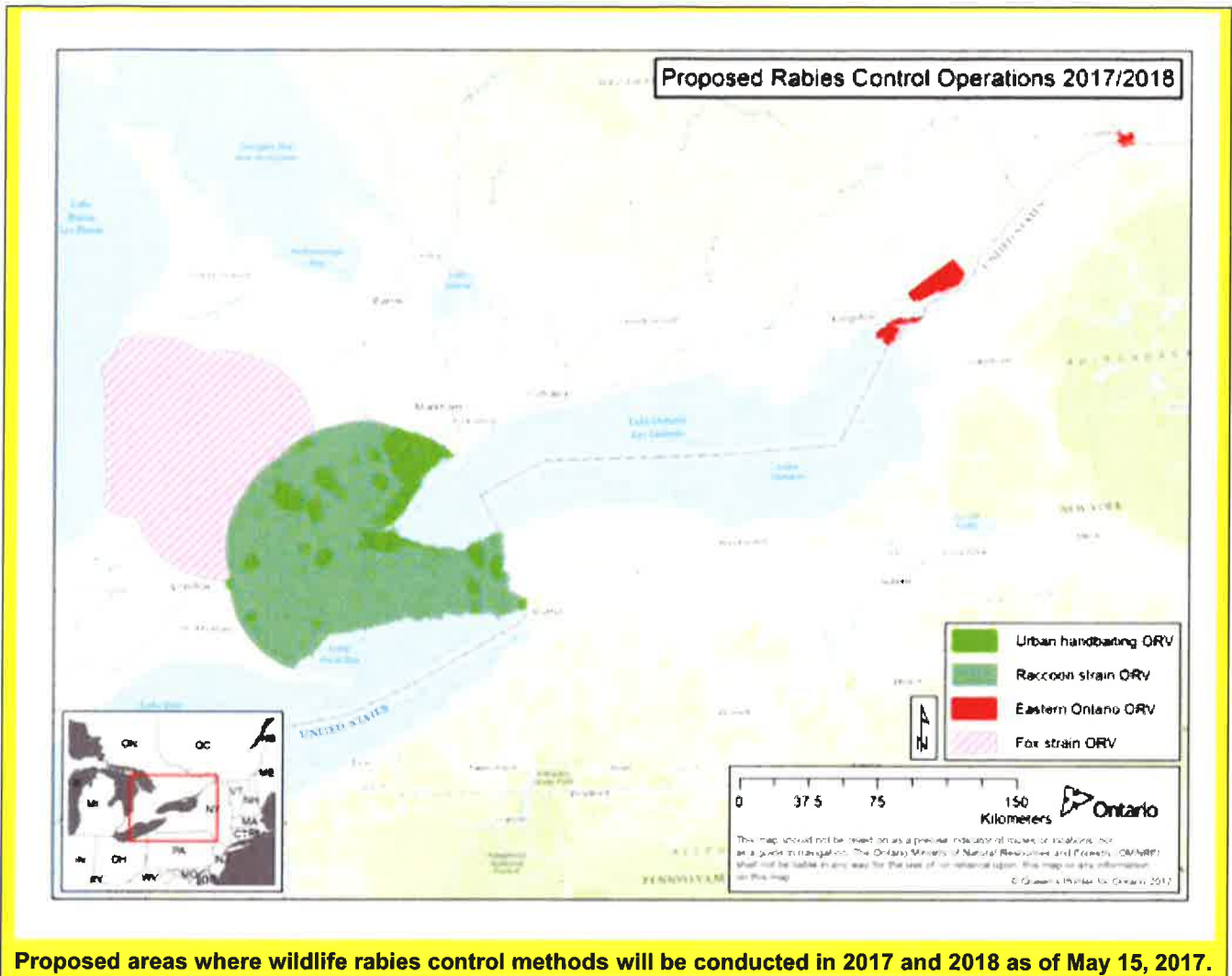
As of 30 August 2017 the original and secondary surveillance areas that had expanded into East Garafraxa and Grand Valley had not progressed any further into Dufferin County.



Image of a Rabies Vaccine bait deployed by MNR from aircraft and by hand in areas of Dufferin County.



Images of the yellow and black MNRF aircraft used to deliver rabies vaccine over Dufferin County.



7. Summary of Current Actions

There is no single agency that is responsible for all aspects of rabies in Ontario.

MNRF conducted mass oral vaccination of raccoons in affected area.

MNRF has established Surveillance and Control Zones to monitor for additional cases.

Dufferin County had not fallen within either a surveillance or control zone until 02 November 2016 however neighbouring upper tier municipalities (Wellington and Peel) have since the beginning.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is actively monitoring the situation and providing biosecurity information for the agricultural sector.

OMAFRA is providing guidance on rabies prevention to rural communities and agricultural operations.

WDGPH is working with the Ministry of Health to ensure the well-being of people in the surveillance zones.

Healthcare providers are required to notify Public Health of any animal bite or animal contact that could result in rabies.

Pre-exposure vaccine is recommended for those working in a job that may expose them to the disease (veterinarians, animal control officers, etc.)

Post-Exposure vaccine can be requested by any physician, treatment is provided by Public Health

Post-exposure treatment (for individuals not previously immunized against rabies)

For immunocompetent individuals it involves administration of immune globulin and four doses of rabies vaccine over a 14-day period. For immunocompromised persons or those taking antimalarial meds an additional fifth dose of vaccine is

given and antibody titers should be determined 7 to 14 days after completing the series.

Post-exposure treatment (for individuals previously immunized against rabies)-

Two doses of rabies vaccine are administered on day 0 and day 3. Immune globulin is NOT administered.

Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health is advising that “the overall threat to general public remains low, but there are measures you can take to minimize your risk:

- **If a person is bitten or scratched by ANY animal** (wild, stray, or a domestic pet) call Public Health at 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4753 (8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or 1-877-884-8653 after-hours)
- **If a pet or livestock is bitten by a wild or stray animal** (with no human exposure) please contact your veterinarian for advice.
- **If you notice a wild or stray animal behaving oddly** or aggressively, call the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNRF) Rabies Hotline at 1-888-574-6656.
- Avoid all contact with wild animals, including preventing contact between pets and wildlife.
- Keeping dogs and cats current on rabies vaccination.”

OMAFRA has published the following reminder of who to call in cases of potential rabies exposure:

1. **Human exposure to a potentially rabid animal - Local Public Health (PH) Unit**
2. **Domestic animal exposure to a potentially rabid animal, NO human exposure - Local veterinarian**
 - o Animal owners should contact their local veterinarian as the first step for any animal health concerns.
 - o Veterinarians can refer to the online training materials or call the OMAFRA Agricultural Information Contact Centre: 1-877-424-1300 for assistance. **As of July 1st, OMAFRA will no longer respond to calls directly from animal owners.**
3. **Abnormal wildlife, no domestic animal exposure, no human exposure - MNRF or CWHC**
 - o For assistance with a live animal, contact a local animal/wildlife control agency first.
 - o For terrestrial wildlife, once dead or confined, call the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Rabies Hotline: 1-888-574-6656.
 - o If a sick or injured bat is found, consider contacting the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) at 1-866-673-4781.

Vaccine baits are scheduled to be distributed:

- mainly in southern Ontario and along our border with New York State, where the raccoon rabies strain is common
- by hand or helicopter in green spaces in urban areas (e.g. parks and ravines)
- from yellow airplanes and helicopters in rural agricultural and forested areas

In Ontario, rabies vaccine baits can only be distributed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF).

2017 Summer Fall Rabies Baiting Schedule

By	Where	When
Helicopter baiting	Southwestern Ontario: Huron and Perth counties	April
Helicopter baiting	Southern Ontario: Green spaces within urban areas in the racoon rabies control zone (map)	August
Helicopter baiting	Southern Ontario: Niagara Peninsula	Mid September
Twin Otter aircraft	Southwestern Ontario: Golden Horseshoe area	Late July to early August
Twin Otter aircraft	Eastern Ontario: St. Lawrence area	Mid August
Twin Otter aircraft	Southwestern Ontario: Stratford area	September
Hand baiting	Southern Ontario: Urban areas within the racoon rabies control zone (map)	Mid July to late October

Dufferin County *is not* located in the 2017 rabies baiting program at this time. Should MNRF determine the need to include Dufferin County a public information plan will be implemented outlining the reason for the baits and what, if any,

precautions the public should take.

On July 31st, 2017 local media reported that MNRF had begun dropping rabies vaccine baits within Dufferin County. Baiting was to occur until the end of August using aircraft in rural areas and placing them by hand in the urban areas.

The OSPCA is reporting that low cost rabies clinics are being offered in Brockville, Waterloo, Kitchener, Mississauga, Oshawa, Milton, Hamilton, St. Catharines, Etobicoke, Pickering, Aurora and Burlington for domestic pet owners.

OSPCA has also advised that there has been a significant increase in the number of raccoons infected with Raccoon Distemper in Dufferin County. Often mistaken for rabies, distemper is fatal for raccoons. Infected animals appear confused, wander aimlessly, are active during daylight hours and appear to have no fear of humans or other animals. These animals usually die within one week of contracting the disease. Although highly contagious to dogs, cats and ferrets, distemper is not contagious for humans. There is no treatment for distemper in domestic pets. A commercially available distemper vaccine is available for dogs, cats and ferrets which is 100% effective in preventing the disease.

Dufferin County's emergency response plan and the associated annex (#013 Foreign Animal Disease plan) will serve as guiding documents for a Dufferin County response should this disease spread into and negatively impact Dufferin County.

As the surveillance zone moves further into Dufferin all stakeholders are requested to advise Dufferin Emergency Management Division of any incidents involving suspected rabies.

MNRF has undertaken a mass vaccination program by dropping approximately 220,000 of the 650,000 vaccine baits that the government maintains in the affected areas. These baits, known as ONRAB are flavoured to attract racoons and contain a packet of oral rabies vaccine which is absorbed through tissues in the raccoon's mouth when they bite into them. This technique has proven successful in containing outbreaks in the past and is the first line of defense in such cases.

MNRF has designated Surveillance and Control Zones to actively respond to the threat of an outbreak and to maintain situational awareness of any spread.

8. Current Organization

MNRF is the lead agency for this issue and the lead for wildlife issues. MNRF Rabies Hotline 1-888-574-6656

OMAFRA is the lead for domestic animals (pets) and agricultural (livestock) issues. OMAFRA Contact Centre 1-877-424-1300

WDGPH is the only Dufferin County agency involved in this incident at this time. 1-800-265-7293

Dufferin Emergency Management will continue to monitor this incident and provide updates when necessary.