



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

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BATS AT OUTDOOR SCHOOL REPORTED TO COUNTY

Health and Human Services Assisting with Rabies Risk Assessment

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Public Health Services (PHS) is on the alert to determine if students, who spent the night in a specific cabin at Cuyamaca Outdoor School had any contact with bats periodically observed there since September.

At least one bat was seen in one cabin where approximately 450 students had slept over a nearly two-month period, typically for four nights, since Sept. 11. No student reported any contact with a bat. The 13 schools that sent students to the outdoor school are sending letters to parents whose children slept in the cabin where the bat was seen. At this time, no bat with rabies has been identified.

“Any students who touched or were bitten by a bat, or woke and found a bat near them, or their sleeping bag, should call their physician,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., Deputy Public Health Officer. The cabins at the outdoor school will be inspected by the County Department of Environmental Health (DEH). DEH is sending letters to other similar types of facilities to ask them to be on the lookout for indoor bat activity.

Rabies is a disease that affects only mammals, chiefly wild animals. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 93 of 100 reported rabies cases in animals are identified in wild animals, including bats, skunks, foxes, and raccoons.

Rabies post-exposure vaccination consists of one dose of rabies immune globulin and five doses of rabies vaccine given over a four-week period. Post-exposure vaccination is safe and effective in preventing rabies when administered as soon as possible after exposure to rabies. If you find a dead or incapacitated bat, or a wild or stray animal that is acting strangely, call your local animal control agency. If you have been bitten by a wild animal, contact your physician.

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