

PRESS RELEASE



NIAGARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
5467 Upper Mountain Road, Suite 100
Lockport, New York 14094-1894

Daniel J. Stapleton, M.B.A.
Public Health Director

Elaine Roman, R.N., B.S.N.
Director of Public Health Planning and
Emergency Preparedness
Public Information Officer

For Immediate Release: August 20, 2012

Contact: James Devald – Director of Environmental Health
(716) 439-7444

USDA Begins 2012 Oral Rabies

Vaccine Efforts in Eastern United States

On August 15, 2012 the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) began conducting an oral rabies vaccine bait drop along the mid-Atlantic and Eastern Coast states to control rabies in wildlife. The bait is dropped from aircraft that fly over areas where susceptible wildlife lives. Depending on the weather, the USDA is expected to start air operations in the Niagara and Erie counties on Tuesday, August 21, 2012. Officials will follow the air drop with hand-baiting in the City of Niagara Falls and helicopter baiting in selected areas of the Niagara and Erie counties through August 30, 2012. Niagara County expects to receive 60,000 baits via the airplane; 18,000 packets via helicopter; and 4,000 via hand.

The public is asked to leave the baits in place so that they can be consumed by wildlife. Standard precautions apply to any human or domestic animal contacting the bait. Contact with the bait should be avoided. However, any incidents of accidental human or animal contact should be reported to 1-888-574-6556; this number is listed on each bait packet.

For general questions or concerns regarding the bait drop, the public can contact the USDA at: 1-866-487-3297 or the Niagara County Department of Health (NCDOH) Environmental Division for local assistance, at 716-439-7444. Additional information is also available at the following websites:

USDA www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/oral_rabies/index.shtml

NCDOH www.niagaracounty.com/health

New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) www.health.ny.gov