Raccoon Tests Positive For Rabies In Colchester

A raccoon tested positive for rabies in the town of Colchester. This is the first laboratory confirmed positive case of rabies in Delaware County in 2026.

A rabid raccoon exposed two dogs in the town of Colchester. The raccoon was sent for testing to the New York State Department of Health Wadsworth Laboratory. There were no human exposures. Both dogs are up to date on their rabies vaccinations and received a booster. Colchester free rabies vaccination clinic is on March 18th from 5:00PM to 6:30PM at the Colchester Highway Garage, 6292 River Rd, Downsville, NY 13755.

Once infected, rabies is a virus that has 100% fatality rate when left untreated, in mammals including humans. Public Health recommends the following precautions to protect yourself and your family from possible exposure to rabies:

- Report any sick or strange acting wildlife
- Vaccinate pets and livestock. New York State law requires that all dogs, cats and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies by 4 months of age. Vaccinating your domestic animal not only provides protection for the animal, but vaccinated pets act as a barrier to keep the rabies virus from spreading between wild animals and people.
- Vaccination is also recommended for livestock with frequent human contact.
- Do not feed wildlife or stray animals and discourage them from seeking food near your home.
- Do not feed strays. According to Public Health Law an owner is defined as any person keeping, harboring, or having charge or control of or permitting any dog, cat or domesticated ferret to remain on or be lodged or fed within such person's house yard or premises.
- Do not approach an unknown animal, either wild or domestic, especially if it is acting in a strange or unusual manner.
- Report all animal bites and any contact with bats to the Health Department in your county. Human rabies can be prevented after exposure by administering a series of shots.
- Keep garbage cans tightly covered and avoid storing any food outside.
- Children should be instructed to tell an adult immediately if they were bitten or scratched by any animal.
- If a pet not up to date on its rabies vaccinations comes in contact with rabid or suspected rabid animal the pet must be quarantined for six months.
- Vaccinated pets that come in contact with rabid or suspected rabies animal must be given a booster rabies vaccination within five days of the contact.

Exposure to rabies can be fatal for a human or a pet. Be sure your dogs, cats and ferrets are up to date on their rabies vaccinations. Vaccinated pets serve as a buffer between rabid wildlife and man. Protect them, and you may reduce your risk of exposure to rabies.

Public Health recommends that pet owners take advantage of any of the free remaining rabies clinics for dogs, cats and ferrets in Delaware County. Pre-registration is suggested for all clinics. You can pre-register at http://health.ny.gov/go2clinic.

- Downsville: March 18, 2026, 5PM-6:30PM, Colchester Highway Garage, 6292 River Rd, Downsville, NY 13755
- Sidney: May 4, 2026, 5:30PM-7:30PM, Sidney Fire Hall: 74 River St. Sidney, NY 13838
- Hancock: May 11, 2026, 5:30-7:30PM, Hancock Town Hall, 661 West Main St. Hancock, NY 13783
- Franklin: June 1, 2026, 5:30PM-7:30PM, Franklin Fire Hall, 351 Main St., Franklin, NY 13775
- Margaretville: June 11, 2026, 4PM-6PM *New Location* Margaretville Fire Hall, 77 Church Street, Margaretville, NY 12455
- Roxbury: June 25, 2026, 4PM-6PM, Roxbury Highway Garage, 52508 State Highway 30, Roxbury, NY 12474
- Walton: July 13, 2026, 5 PM- 7 PM, First Baptist Church, 55 Townsend St, Walton, NY 13856
- Delhi: August 12, 2026, 5 PM-7 PM Delhi Fire Hall, 140 Delview Terrace Extn. Delhi, NY 13753
- Stamford: September 9, 2026, 5 PM- 7 PM, Stamford Fire Hall, 111 Main St. Stamford, NY 12167
- Deposit: October 5, 2026, 5:30PM-7:30PM, *New Location* DPW Garage 192 Front St, Deposit, NY 13754

To report a suspected rabid animal call Delaware County Public Health Services at 607-832-5200. For more information call 607-832-5200 or visit our website at www.delawarecountypublichealth.com ☛