

Contact: Jennifer Moorer, District PIO
Phone: (706) 272-2125, ext. 346
Cell: (706) 280-9115
Fax: (706) 272-2221
Email: jamoorer@dh.state.ga.us

For Immediate Release

“Rescued” kitten exposed family and vet assistant to rabies

Canton (GA) June 24, 2010 ~ Cherokee County Environmental Health officials reported that a stray kitten picked up by a family residing on Lake Circle near the Cherokee/Cobb County line recently tested positive for rabies. Members of the family and a worker at a Cobb County veterinarian clinic were exposed to the kitten prior to rabies testing.

Officials said the kitten had been “rescued” by the Cherokee County family on June 2, 2010, and it seemed sickly, so they took it to a nearby animal clinic in Cobb County on June 3. While being treated at the clinic that day, the kitten scratched a veterinarian technical assistant.

“Due to the kitten’s illness, it was euthanized, and I was called about shipping the head to the [Georgia state] lab,” stated Glen Gordy of Cherokee County Environmental Health. “However, the bite occurred to a person in Cobb County; therefore, I advised the veterinarian’s office to call Cobb County Animal Control.

“I was then notified on June 8 by Cherokee County Animal Control that the test on the kitten came back positive for rabies, and it was at that time I learned that the family from Cherokee County had been exposed to the kitten. All people exposed are seeking rabies treatment at a Cobb County hospital and residents in the Lake Circle area were notified to contact us if they believe they were exposed.”

To avoid rabies exposure, residents are urged to stay away from unfamiliar animals and to make certain all pets and livestock are current on their rabies vaccinations.

The recommendation for a possible rabid animal bite is to thoroughly wash the wound with soap and water, and then seek immediate medical attention with the following information on hand:

- The geographic location of the incident
- The type of animal that was involved
- How the exposure occurred (provoked or unprovoked)
- The vaccination status of any pets involved
- Whether the biting animal can be safely captured and tested for rabies

For more information about rabies and its prevention, call Cherokee County Environmental Health at (770) 479-0444 or log onto www.cdc.gov.

###