

# Rabies

## Roles and responsibilities for BC veterinarians

### Authority

- Rabies is a reportable animal disease to the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) in BC under the Reportable and Notifiable Disease Regulation, pursuant to the BC Animal Health Act [2014]. The CVO shares these reports of zoonotic diseases in animals with the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) under an Information Sharing Agreement.
- Rabies is a reportable animal disease to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) under the federal Reportable Diseases Regulations, Health of Animals Act.

### Reporting

- The veterinarian fulfills his/her reporting requirements by submitting samples from a suspect animal to the CFIA laboratory for rabies testing.
- Any veterinarian who suspects rabies in an animal (dead or alive) should inform the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Public Health Veterinarian (PHV) at 778-677-7790 to obtain assistance with risk assessment and management.
- When a veterinarian becomes aware that humans have been exposed to a potentially rabid animal (domestic or wild) they will:
  - explain that rabies is a zoonotic disease ; **and**
  - encourage the client to consult their physician or local public health authority for further guidance ; **and**
  - report the potential human rabies exposure to the health authority where the exposed human resides.

### Risk assessment and management

- Guidelines to assess and manage suspect rabies cases can be found at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/rabies>



BC Centre for Disease Control  
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

**For assistance contact:**  
Erin Fraser  
Public Health Veterinarian  
778-677-7790


# Rabies in British Columbia

## 2017 results

Rabies testing is performed at the CFIA Laboratory in Lethbridge, Alberta.  
[www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca)



**0** Dogs and cats positive for rabies

 Positive bat

**11** Bats positive for rabies

**24** Dogs and cats tested

**92** Bats tested

**122** Animals tested



**Bats are the only rabies reservoir in BC.** Rabies prevalence in BC bat populations is estimated to be **<0.5%**. However, rates are higher (4-12%) in testing results as rabid bats are more likely to be captured and tested.