



TOE RIVER HEALTH DISTRICT
Avery & Mitchell County
Health Departments



Franklin M Gardner
Interim Health Director

Frank Craig, MD & Julia Sherrill, MD
Medical Directors

Diane Walker, Chair
Board of Health

Rabies is a fatal but preventable viral disease. It can spread to people and pets if they are bitten or scratched by a rabid animal. The first symptoms of rabies may be nonspecific and include lethargy, fever, vomiting, and anorexia.

Here at the Toe River Health District (Avery and Mitchell County Health Departments) we respect your freedoms; however, with any freedom comes personal responsibility – especially when pets are involved. Even though rabies is relatively rare in Avery and Mitchell Counties, we do see it in the area on occasion. Since August 1, 2008, Avery County has only had one raccoon test positive for rabies (2020); Mitchell County has only had one bobcat test positive for rabies (2011) and two raccoons test positive (prior to 2020). Here is a [link](#) to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services website with the statewide statics for all known rabies positive tests since August 1, 2008.

We want you to protect yourself and others from rabies and prevent any possible exposure. Here are some simple rules (and laws) to consider:

1. Pursuant to [North Carolina law](#), make sure your cats, dogs and ferrets are vaccinated for rabies.
2. If you see an animal acting oddly, stay away from it and use these resources below to help keep you safe.
3. Should you encounter a dead animal in the road or highway, contact the NC DOT HOTLINE at 1-877-368-4968 or [online](#).
4. Should you have a wild animal issue in your yard, contact the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Helpline 1-866-318-2401 or [online](#).
5. And remember, pursuant to [North Carolina law](#), it's the owner's responsibility to put down their dog if they know, or have good reason to believe, that their dog, or any dog belonging to any person under their control, has been bitten by a mad dog.
6. Finally, here is a [link](#) to some helpful rabies information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As always, you can contact your local Health Department should you have any questions.

Avery County Health Department 828-733-6031
Mitchell County Health Department 828-688-2371
<http://www.toeriverhealth.org/>



Ensuring the conditions that allow the people of Avery and Mitchell Counties to be Healthy

130 Forest Service Drive - Suite D, Bakersville, NC 28705 828.688.5060