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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN DUVAL COUNTY ISSUES RABIES ALERT**

Jacksonville, Florida – The Florida Department of Health in Duval County (DOH-Duval) has issued a rabies alert for the Wesconnet area of Jacksonville; discovery of a rabid cat in the Wesconnet area is the reason for the alert, which will remain in effect through September 8, 2022.

Rabies is a viral disease that can infect all warm-blooded animals, including cats, dogs and people, although some species are somewhat naturally resistant to the disease. Because the virus can be shed in the saliva of infected animals, the virus is usually transmitted when the saliva of an infected animal is introduced beneath the skin of a bite wound. An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals or domestic animals that have not been vaccinated against rabies. All domestic animals should be vaccinated against rabies and all wildlife contact should be avoided, particularly with that of raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, otters, bobcats and coyotes. Rabies can be fatal and the only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies-specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Beginning the appropriate treatment soon after exposure can protect an exposed person from the disease.

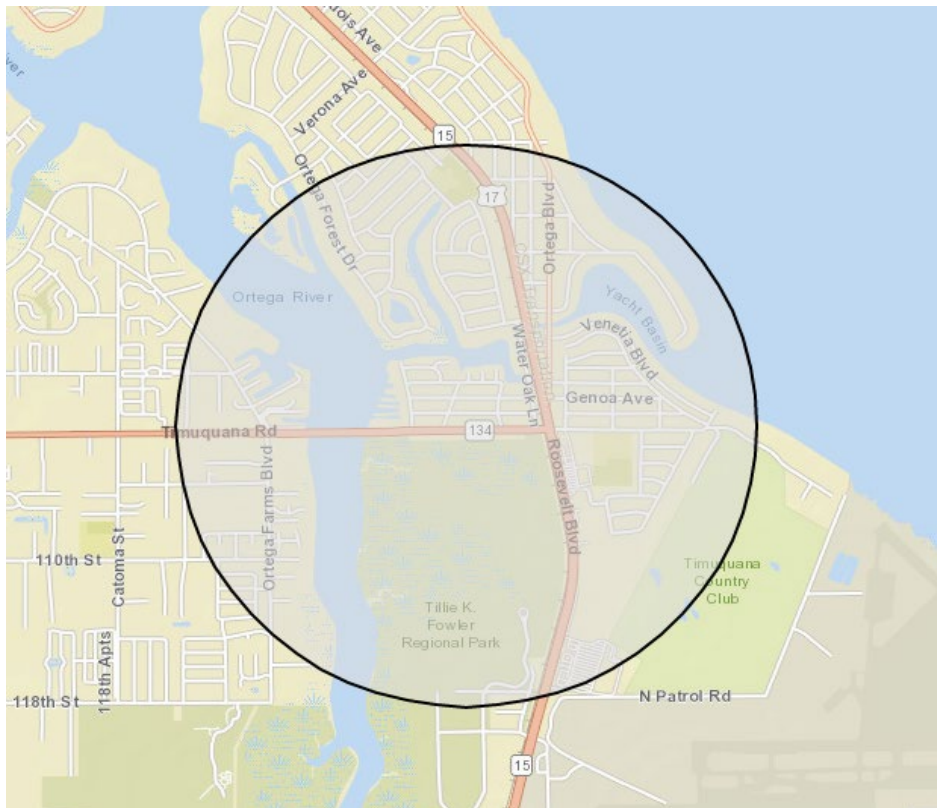
**The following guidance should be followed:**

- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets
- Always maintain control of pets
- If a pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact the Florida Department of Health in Duval County at (904) 253-1280
- Persons who have been bitten or scratched by wild or domestic animals should seek medical attention and report the injury to the Florida Department of Health in Duval County at (904) 253-1280
- Animal Control should be called to remove any stray animals from neighborhoods

- Do not handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals by leaving pet food outside or by leaving garbage cans open
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into homes
- Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear cute or friendly
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces

**Rabies Alert Boundaries:**

- Bordered on the north near Robert Gordon Drive and Prince Edward Road
- Bordered on the south near Blain Street and Patrol Road, at Roosevelt Road
- Bordered on the east by Fair Lane, at Timuquana Road
- Bordered on the west near Little Acres Lane, at Timuquana Road



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The Department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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