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DOH REMINDS RESIDENTS TO AVOID CONTACT WITH WILDLIFE



A bat found at the Treasure Coast Square Mall tests positive for rabies

Contact:

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Martin County, FL – A bat found inside the Treasure Coast Square Mall in Jensen Beach has tested positive for rabies. A mall employee, who came in contact with the bat, has been advised to receive post exposure prophylaxis.

All residents and visitors should be aware that rabies is present in the wild animal population and should avoid contact with wildlife.

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system and is fatal to warm blooded animals and humans. The only treatment for human exposure to rabies is rabies specific immune globulin and rabies immunization. Appropriate treatment started soon after exposure, will protect the person from the disease.

Take precautions and avoid being bitten:

- Do not handle, feed, or unintentionally attract wild animals with open garbage cans or litter.
- Call your local animal control agency to remove any stray animals from your neighborhood. Martin County Animal Control at 772-463-3211.
- Never adopt wild animals or bring them into your home.
- Keep rabies vaccinations up to date for all pets.
- Keep your pets under direct supervision so they do not come in contact with wild animals. If your pet is bitten by a wild animal, seek veterinary assistance for the animal immediately and contact Martin County Animal Control at 772-463-3211.
- Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, schools, and other similar areas, where they might come in contact with people and pets.
- 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 Martin County at 772-221-4000, option # 6.
- Information about *Bats in Buildings*: <https://myfwc.com/conservation/you- conserve/wildlife/bats/bats-in-buildings/>

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