

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
 2019 – PAHAN - 453 – 08-02-ADV  
**Annual Oral Rabies Vaccination in Western Pennsylvania: Human Implications**



<b>DATE:</b>	08/02/2019
<b>TO:</b>	Health Alert Network
<b>FROM:</b>	Rachel Levine, MD, Secretary of Health
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Annual Oral Rabies Vaccination in Western Pennsylvania: Human Implications</b>
<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b>	Allegheny, Beaver, Crawford, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Lawrence, Mercer, and Washington Counties
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Western Pennsylvania
<b>STREET ADDRESS:</b>	n/a
<b>COUNTY:</b>	n/a
<b>MUNICIPALITY:</b>	n/a
<b>ZIP CODE:</b>	n/a

**This transmission is a “Health Advisory”:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**HOSPITALS:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, NURSING, AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL

**EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) is releasing the following information regarding the 2019 oral raccoon rabies vaccine (ORV) baiting campaign.

This is the eighteenth year that federal, state and county agencies are working together to conduct an oral raccoon rabies vaccine (ORV) baiting project in parts of western Pennsylvania during August and early September. Distribution of the baits will begin August 5 in Allegheny County and continue throughout August and the first week of September in parts of Beaver, Crawford, Erie, Fayette, Greene, Lawrence, Mercer and Washington Counties. Baits will be distributed from helicopters, low-flying aircrafts as well as by local teams spreading baits by hand. All baiting should be completed by September 5<sup>th</sup> (weather permitting).

The vaccine is “Raboral-V-RG” manufactured by Merial, Inc. (Athens, GA). The MSDS is available at [http://www.raboral.com/sites/raboral/files/docs/MSDS-RABORAL\\_V-RG\\_w\\_bait\\_2005\(USA\).pdf](http://www.raboral.com/sites/raboral/files/docs/MSDS-RABORAL_V-RG_w_bait_2005(USA).pdf). Raboral-V contains live highly attenuated recombinant vaccinia virus. The vaccine is in a heat-sealed plastic packet or “sachet.” The liquid in the sachet is pink in color. The sachet is coated or placed inside a fishmeal block. The ORV bait is specifically

designed to attract wild raccoons which are immunized when they bite into the sachet. The baits have been safety tested in dogs, cats and other domestic animals and should not harm them even if ingested.

Please report any suspected accidental human contact with the vaccine or suspected adverse events to the appropriate local health department or district via our toll free line (1-877-PA-HEALTH) or by dialing directly: Allegheny County, 412-350-4046; Erie County, 814-451-6700; Beaver, Washington, Greene and Fayette Counties, 724-830-2701; Crawford, Mercer, and Lawrence Counties, 724-662-6068. **Consultation is available for human exposures to vaccine and for suspected adverse events. Consultation is particularly important for ocular exposures, for exposed individuals with immune-suppression or immune-deficiency, and for individuals who develop one or more vesicles.** Vaccinia immune globulin and anti-viral agents are available if indicated. If you are unable to reach your local health department or district office in a timely manner, consultation is available through the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 717-787-3350.

Since 1990, over 100 million doses of Raboral V-RG animal vaccine have been distributed in the United States. The only two documented human adverse reactions occurred after pet dogs punctured baits and owners [one pregnant and one on multiple immunosuppressive medications] had direct contact of the vaccine with non-intact skin.

Although ORV programs have produced very few documented adverse human events anywhere in the world, it is important to educate individuals to avoid contact with bait contents, wash any areas of accidental exposure, and maintain surveillance for adverse events, including vesicles that develop on skin areas exposed to vaccine or at bite wound sites.

A poster alerting residents of baiting areas, a brochure and fact sheets on rabies are available at: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Rabies.aspx>

The USDA ORV site is at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife-damage/rabies>



Categories of Health Alert messages:

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of August 2, 2019, but may be modified in the future.