

## Logan County horse tests positive for rabies virus

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

---

The Colorado Department of Agriculture is encouraging livestock and pet owners to discuss animal health concerns, including the need for rabies vaccination, with their local veterinarian after a horse in Logan County was euthanized and subsequently tested positive for rabies.

“The department would like to stress two very important points,” said state veterinarian Dr. Keith Roehr. “One—owners should monitor their animals for clinical signs of rabies, and two—local veterinarians are a valuable resource to help producers decide the best course of action to protect their livestock and pets from rabies.”

Livestock and pet owners are encouraged to discuss vaccination with their veterinarian for animals that could be exposed to wildlife that carry and could transmit the rabies virus to dogs, cats, horses, small ruminants, llamas, alpacas and petting zoo animals.

Rabies is a viral disease infecting the brain and central nervous system. The clinical appearance of rabies typically falls into two types: “aggressive” and “dumb.” Aggressive rabies symptoms include combativeness and violent behavior and sensitivity to touch and other kinds of stimulation. There is also a “dumb” form of the disease in which the animal is lethargic, weak in one or more limbs and unable to raise its head or make sounds because its throat and neck muscles are paralyzed.

Rabies can be passed from animals to humans. Rabies is spread primarily through the bite of rabid animals, resulting in the spread of the disease through their infected saliva. Rabies also can be spread when saliva from an infected animal gets into open wounds, cuts or enters through membranes of the eyes, nose or mouth. No cure exists for rabies once symptoms appear, although there is a vaccine to prevent the infection.

“Animal owners need to primarily look for any dramatic behavioral changes. That is typically one of the hallmark signs that the animal may be suffering from rabies,” said Roehr.

Examples of unusual behavior include: wild mammals that show no fear of people and pets; nocturnal animals that are active in daylight; and bats found on the ground, in swimming pools or that have been caught by a pet. Rabid carnivores, such as skunks, foxes, bobcats, coyotes,

## **Logan County horse tests positive for rabies virus**

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

---

dogs and cats, may become aggressive and may attempt to bite people, pets and livestock.

Holyoke Enterprise May 9, 2013