

# Bait Drop Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the oral rabies vaccine bait drop?

The West Virginia Oral Rabies Vaccination Project conducts a bait drop to vaccinate raccoons against rabies. The 2015 drop is planned for late August. This program is just like any other immunization program. Just as children are vaccinated against measles or mumps, raccoons can be vaccinated against rabies.

## Who is conducting the bait drop?

The bait drop is a cooperative effort between USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (DNR), your local health department, the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health. USDA personnel will be distributing the baits.

## How is a raccoon vaccinated?

A raccoon is vaccinated by eating bait containing the vaccine. Baits are dropped in areas where raccoons are likely to find them.

## Where will the baits be dropped?

The baits will be dispensed along a wide corridor through the central part of the state, extending from the northern panhandle to the southern coalfields. The involved counties may include: Barbour, Braxton, Brooke, Doddridge, Fayette, Greenbrier, Hancock, Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Marshall, McDowell, Mercer, Monroe, Nicholas, Ohio, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Randolph, Ritchie, Summers, Taylor, Tyler, Upshur, Webster, Wetzel and Wyoming.

## How can I help with the bait drop?

You may help by being aware of what the baits look like and encouraging children to leave them alone. Pet owners may help by keeping all dogs and cats inside or on a leash at least 5 days after your area was baited. This gives raccoons time to find the baits and eat them.

## What is the ORV bait?

Baits are in two forms. One looks like a ketchup package with the exterior covered with a fine brown-colored fish meal coating. The other block-type bait resembles a fig cookie. Inside a hard brown-colored fishmeal polymer shell is a smaller version of a ketchup package which contains the vaccine. The vaccine appears as a red to purple liquid.



## Is the vaccine harmful?

### Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology

350 Capitol Street, Room 125, Charleston, WV 25301-3715

Phone: 304.558.5358 Fax: 304.558.6335

<http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/Zoonosis/Rabies/Pages/ORV.aspx>

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The vaccine is not harmful to wild animals or pets. Although the exposure risk to humans is very slight, the following information is important:

- Be aware of what the bait looks like.
- Encourage children to leave the baits alone.
- Keep dogs and cats inside or on leashes at least 5 days after your area was baited.
- Do not attempt to take baits away from your pet; you may be bitten.
- If you touch the bait or the liquid vaccine inside the bait (a red to purple fluid), thoroughly wash your hands or exposed skin with soap and water.

## **Are gloves required to handle the bait, or will I be harmed if I handle the intact bait without gloves?**

It is not harmful to touch intact bait; however, the bait does have a strong odor, so you might prefer to wear gloves when handling it. A paper towel can also be used. Wash your hands thoroughly after any direct contact with the bait. Avoid direct contact with baits that have broken open; use gloves or a paper towel to throw these baits away.

## **What if I find bait near my home?**

Leave it alone, or if it is intact and out in the open, toss it into brushy or forested cover using a glove or paper towel.

## **What if my dog or cat eats the bait?**

The bait is not harmful to pets or livestock. Do not try to take the bait from an animal. On occasion, when several baits were consumed by a dog or cat, an upset stomach has been reported.

## **What if my child eats or has contact with bait?**

The bait has a strong fish odor and is usually unappealing to children. It is not possible to get rabies from the vaccine. People with certain medical conditions, such as an immunodeficiency problem, may be prone to a local infection if the vaccine (red to purple liquid) gets into an open wound. Using soap and water to wash any skin area exposed to the vaccine can prevent this. In the unlikely event that a child bites the bait or the actual vaccine packet, contact the West Virginia Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 1-800-423-1271, extension 1.

## **If my child or pet eats the vaccine, will either of them get rabies?**

No. It is not possible to get rabies from the vaccine. The vaccine does not contain the rabies virus, only a single gene from that virus.

## **Can this vaccine be used to vaccinate my dog or cat against rabies?**

No. Vaccination of pets should be done by veterinarians in accordance with state and local laws. Pet vaccination is necessary to protect your pet against rabies.

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