



CHICO POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Rabid Bat Found in Chico

A bat found on the grounds of Loma Vista and Marigold Elementary Schools on Monday was tested and found to be positive for Rabies.

Bats are beneficial in that they eat a huge number of night-flying insects, including agricultural pests, making them a valuable part of our ecology. However, bats are also capable of carrying Rabies, and are the primary source of Rabies in Butte County. Because Rabies is a fatal, it is important to prevent exposure, and if exposed receive anti-rabies treatment.

The only way to know if a bat has Rabies is to have it tested by a laboratory. Any bat that is active during the day, is found in an unusual location (indoors or on the ground), or is unable to fly has a higher likelihood of being rabid. These bats are often easily approached, but should not be handled. If you find a bat under any of these circumstances, please contact Chico Animal Control at 897-4960 or Butte County Animal Control at 891-2907 to have the bat picked up for testing. Animal Control should be contacted if a bat is found in a room where someone has been sleeping, where a child has been unattended, or near a mentally impaired or intoxicated person, because a bat bite is so small it could go undetected. You should also contact Animal Control if your pet is found playing with a bat. While waiting for Animal Control, place a cardboard box, coffee can, or even a plastic soda cup over the bat to keep it contained. Do not attempt to kill the bat.

Rabies is transmitted by saliva, and is not transmitted through contact with feces, blood or urine, or even by touching the fur. If you are bitten by a bat, wash the bite thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately. Your physician can advise you on the right course of treatment. Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if they appear friendly. Prevent bats from entering living quarters or occupied spaces in homes, churches, schools, and other similar areas where they might contact people and pets. Keep Rabies vaccinations current for all your dogs and cats. These simple precautions will help minimize your exposure to Rabies.

For more information visit <http://www.buttecounty.net/publichealth/animal/bats-and-rabies.pdf>, or call Chico Animal Control at 897-4960.

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