

**HUNTERDON COUNTY**  
**DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
PO Box 2900, Flemington, New Jersey 08822  
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**UPDATE: New Jersey Animal Rabies Cases Summarized by County and Species, January 1 – December 31, 2011**

**To: HMC, Veterinarians, Animal Care & Control Professionals and Local Boards of Health**

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**New Jersey Animal Rabies Cases Summarized by County and Species, January 1 - December 31, 2011**

The summary of New Jersey Animal Rabies Cases by County and Species for January 1 - December 31, 2011 is available on the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) website ([http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/rabies\\_stats.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/rabies_stats.shtml)).

New Jersey has both raccoon and bat rabies virus variants, existing in separate ecologic cycles in the State. Raccoons cycle the raccoon variant and the wildlife species most commonly infected by raccoons are (in order of incidence) skunks, foxes and groundhogs. Bat variant rabies virus cycles predominately among the bat population, and is a significant public health concern because the majority of human rabies cases acquired in the United States are from bat exposures.

During 2011, 257 terrestrial animals and 36 bats were confirmed at the New Jersey Public Health, Environmental and Agricultural Laboratories to be infected with rabies, for a total of 293 animal cases. The total number of animal rabies cases in New Jersey has remained consistent over the last 5 years, indicative of the enzootic status of the disease in the raccoon and bat populations. Submission of specimens for rabies testing has declined from 3,539 in 2009 to 3,084 specimens in 2011. This decrease may be related to reports received by the DHSS of reduced animal control resources. Bergen (46), Burlington (30), and Morris (24) Counties had the largest number of diagnosed rabid animals in the State. Rabies is sporadic in livestock species, and one rabid horse was identified in Salem County in 2011. Since the raccoon variant entered the State in 1989, there have been 11 bovine, 11 equine, 1 sheep and 1 goat documented with rabies.

Cats have accounted for approximately 90% of the domestic animal cases since 1989, and are considered the terrestrial species of highest risk to transmit the disease to humans. There were 22 rabid cats in 2011, compared with 17 in 2010 and 12 in 2009. Accordingly, the DHSS recommends that local public health and animal control agencies focus rabies prevention and vaccination efforts on cats, especially free-roaming cats. Educational efforts should target persons who provide care for free-roaming cats.

Thirty six bats were confirmed rabid in 2011, compared with 40 in 2010. The five year annual average of rabid bats from 2006-2011 was 45. The reduced number of bats identified with rabies in 2012 may be related to the decreased bat populations resulting from white-nose disease infections.

For more information on rabies visit the NJDHSS website (<http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/rabies/techinfo.shtml>) or contact the DHSS Infectious and Zoonotic Disease Program at 609-826-4872.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES  
 Division of Epidemiology, Environmental, and Occupational Health  
 Infectious and Zoonotic Diseases Program  
**NEW JERSEY ANIMAL RABIES CASES BY COUNTY AND SPECIES**  
 January 1 - December 31, 2011

COUNTY	Raccoon		Skunk		Fox		Cat		Groundhog		Bovine		Equine		Dog***		Ferret		Other Domestic*		Deer		Other Wild**		Total Terrestrial		Bats
	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date	Epizootic	Year-to-Date
Atlantic	9	218		23		14		11	1	2															10	268	2
Bergen	32	250	8	90			3	36	3	16							1		1				1		46	395	1
Burlington	23	415	4	61		17	2	36	1	7				1									1		30	528	3
Camden	9	131		10		1		16		1															9	159	0
Cape May		94		19		2		2															1		0	118	0
Cumberland	3	174	2	43		2	1	8																	6	227	0
Essex	6	126		20			1	14		6					1				2		1		1	7	171	1	
Gloucester	4	140	1	55		6		17		2				1									2		5	223	5
Hudson		9		5				4																	0	18	0
Hunterdon	7	358		37		5	3	28		8		2			1		1	1			4	1		10	446	1	
Mercer	13	318	3	19	3	10	1	15		5							1								20	368	5
Middlesex		173	1	65		3	3	20		9															4	266	0
Monmouth	11	393	2	49		14	1	27		10		1		3											14	497	3
Morris	20	426	1	90		13	1	22	2	14		1			1				3		1	2		24	573	4	
Ocean	16	326	4	71		12	1	31	1	9					1										22	450	0
Passaic	17	189	1	47	1	5	1	17	2	12				2								1	1	22	274	2	
Salem	2	51		10		1	1	4		1			1	1	1										4	69	0
Somerset	4	314	1	49	1	11		16		8									3				1	6	404	3	
Sussex	4	239	2	104	2	12	2	17	1	21		3			2								1	11	399	2	
Union		98		26		1		9																	0	134	2
Warren	4	251	2	64		12	1	21		8		4		1					1		2	3		7	363	2	
Unknown		1																							0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>4694</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>6369</b>	<b>36</b>

NUMBERS IN WHITE COLUMNS REPRESENT YEAR-TO-DATE TOTALS (January 1 through December 31, 2011)

NUMBERS IN SHADED COLUMNS REPRESENT EPIZOOTIC TOTALS (January 1989 through December 2011)

\*Other Domestic includes 9 rabbits, 1 goat and 1 sheep

\*\*Other Wild includes 4 otters, 4 opossums, 4 coyotes, 2 beavers, and 1 bear

\*\*\*One dog diagnosed in Essex County during 2008 acquired rabies in Iraq and became ill shortly after importation into NJ

Year	Specimen Tested	Terrestrial Cases	Bat Cases	Total Cases
2008	3463	228	56	284
2009	3539	255	32	287
2010	3328	242	40	282
2011	3084	257	36	293

Cats have accounted for 90% of the domestic animal cases in New Jersey since 1989. For the last 5 years there has been an average of 17 cats infected with rabies annually.