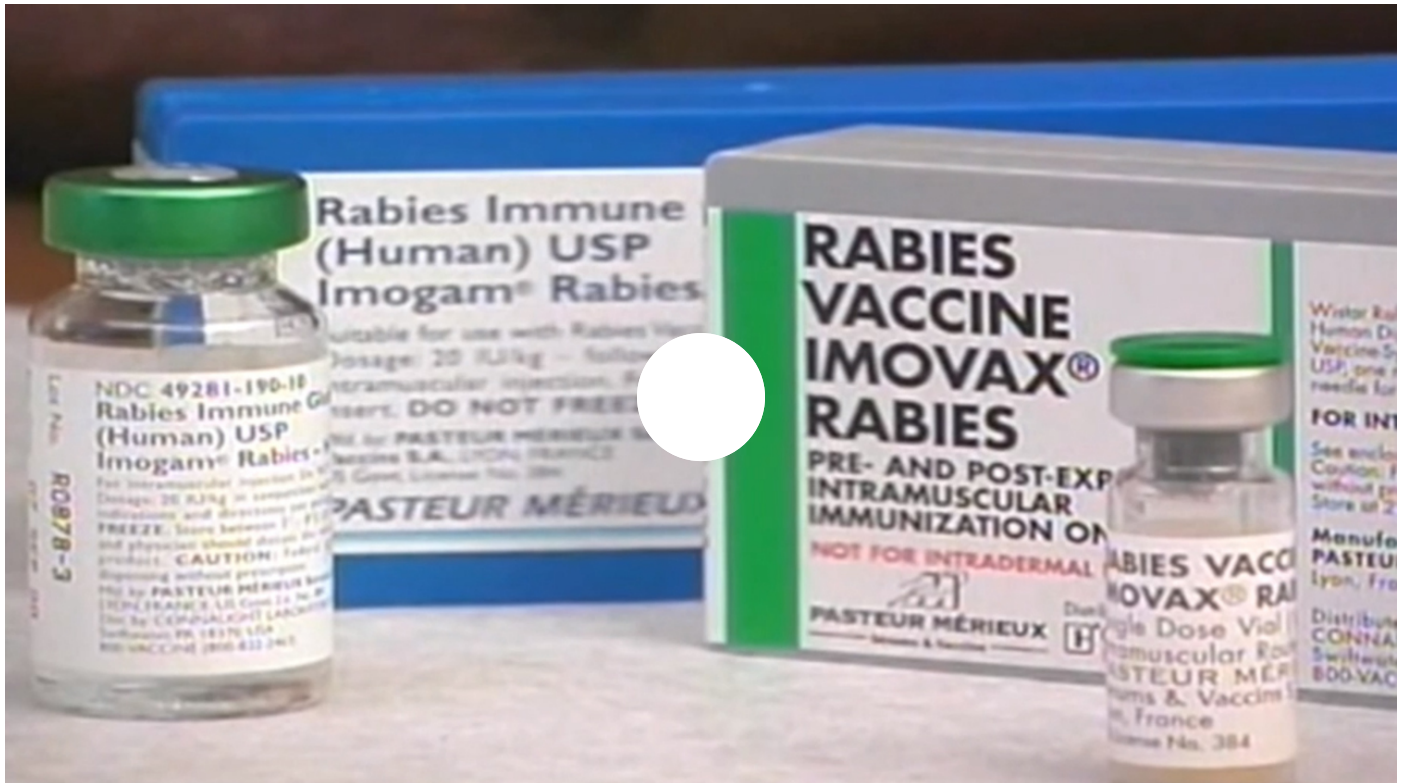


Rabid puppy exposes dozens to deadly virus in SC and Georgia, health officials say

By [Noah Feit](#) July 25, 2021 01:28 PM,



What to do if you think you were bitten by a rabid animal

Editor's note: The following video contains graphic content. Peter Costa, with the Global Alliance for Rabies Control, explains how to properly clean and treat a wound from a bite from a possible rabid animal. By Delayna Earley

At least 25 people and several pets recently were [exposed to a puppy with rabies](#), according to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

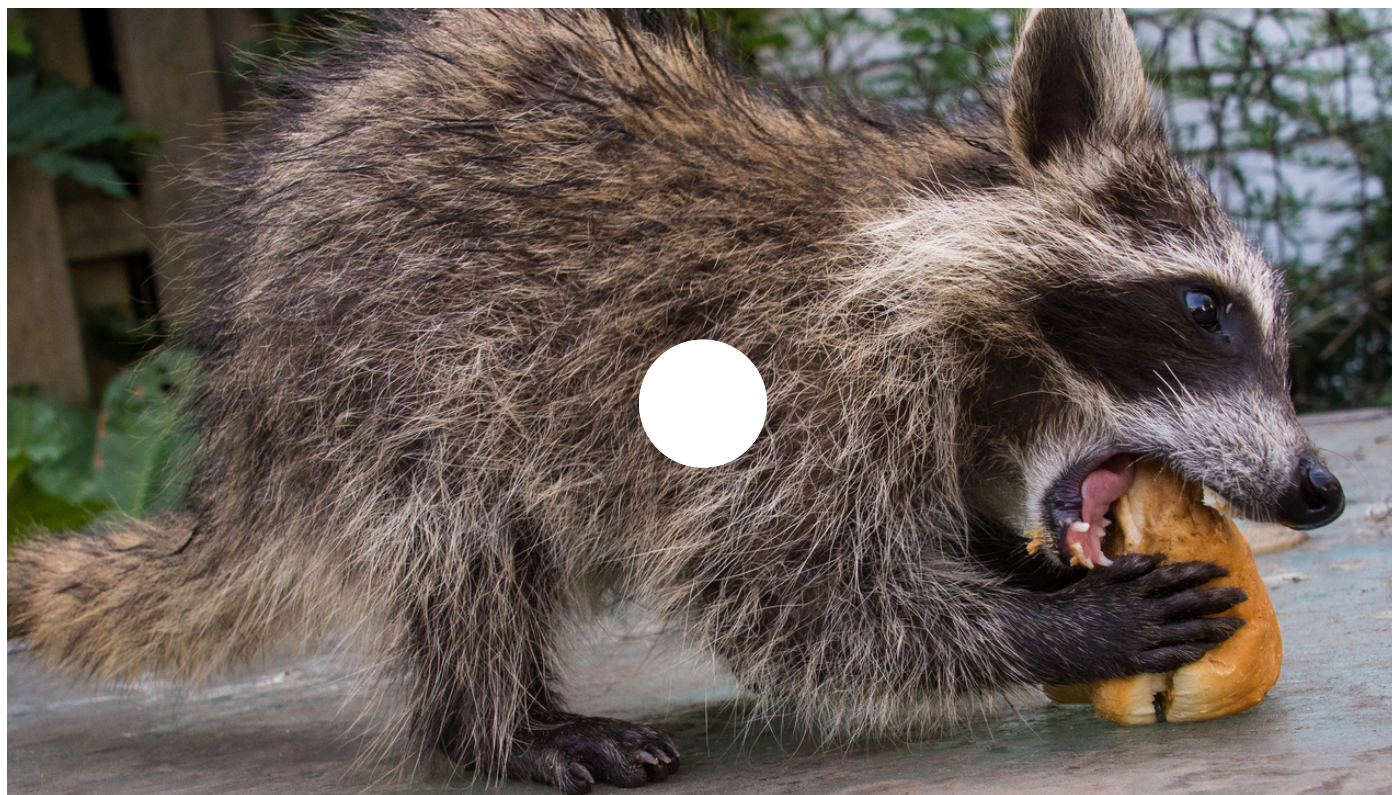
The people who came into contact with the rabid dog live in South Carolina, with possible others exposed in Georgia, DHEC officials said in a news

release.

The puppy found in [Edgefield County, near Lanier Road in Johnston](#), was sent to DHEC's lab for testing on July 19, and was confirmed to have rabies a day later, according to the release. DHEC did not say whether the puppy had been euthanized.

The puppy covered a lot of ground before it was confirmed to have the deadly virus. It lived in Augusta, Ga., from July 14-17, before it was brought to Florence County, S.C., on July 17, DHEC said.

DHEC said it's working with the [Georgia Department of Public Health](#) to identify additional exposures.



Rabies: 'the most deadly virus on the planet'

Although not that common, rabies is a serious concern among mammals. By Fairfax County Virginia

People confirmed to have been in contact with the puppy were told to seek

medical care, health officials said. Further information on their conditions was not made available.

In addition to the people, at least six dogs were exposed to the puppy and will be quarantined as required in the [South Carolina Rabies Control Act](#).

DHEC officials said if a pet is found with unknown wounds it could have been exposed to rabies, and the owner should call [803-642-1637](#) during normal business hours, or [888-847-0902](#) at other times.

Getting pets vaccinated for rabies is the best way to protect against the disease, DHEC said.

"Any mammal has the ability to carry and transmit the disease to humans or pets. So, give wild and stray animals plenty of space," DHEC's Rabies Program Team Leader Terri McCollister said in the release. "In South Carolina, rabies is most often found in wildlife such as raccoons, skunks, foxes and bats, but pets are just as susceptible to the virus. If you see an animal in need, avoid touching it. Contact someone trained in handling animals, such as your local animal control officer, wildlife control officer, or a wildlife rehabilitator."



Are you at risk for rabies?

Rabies is a virus that infects wildlife, especially bats, raccoons, skunks and foxes in the US. It can spread to people and pets when they are bitten or scratched, causing fever, agitation and death. By Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

This puppy is the first animal in Edgefield County to [test positive for rabies](#) in 2021, DHEC said. There have been 46 cases of rabid animals statewide this year.

In 2020, one of the 168 confirmed rabies cases in South Carolina was in Edgefield County, according to the release.

If you think you've been exposed to a rabid animal, immediately wash the affected area with plenty of soap and water, and seek medical care, DHEC officials said.

Health officials said an exposure is direct contact — possibly through broken

skin or mucous membranes in the eyes, nose, or mouth — from a bite, scratch or contact with saliva, body fluids, or brain/nervous system tissue from an infected or possibly infected animal.

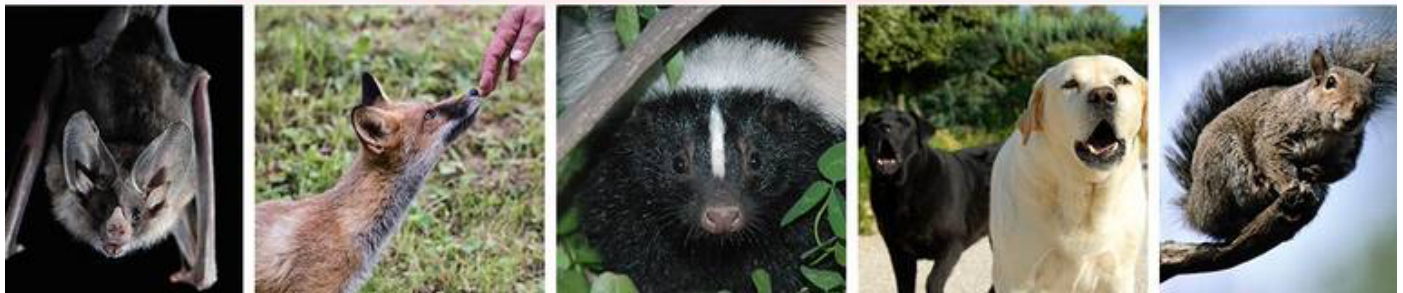
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RABIES ALERT



At least 25 people and six dogs were exposed to a puppy with rabies, according to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. *South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control*