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Hunterdon County Department of Health

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Health Officer/Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Date: October 31, 2019

Health Department and Parks Department Issues Public Alert after Coyote Tests Positive for Rabies

Flemington- The Hunterdon County Health Department and Parks Department are issuing an alert to residents after a coyote tested positive for Rabies at the Point Mountain Reserve, Hunterdon County Park in Lebanon Township, New Jersey. The County is working in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Health, Department of Environmental Protection, NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, Warren County Health Department and Hunterdon County Animal Control Officers.

Anyone who may have had exposure to the coyote near the area of the Point Mountain Reserve between the dates of 10/13/19 and 10/27/19 should notify their primary care physician immediately or visit a local hospital Emergency Department immediately to discuss the need for Rabies post-exposure treatment.

A bite incident occurred at the Point Mountain Reservation Central Section on Saturday, October 26, 2019. Hunterdon County is working with individuals exposed to the coyote to ensure appropriate medical treatment to prevent illness. Point Mountain Reservation Central Section will remain closed through Sunday, November 3, 2019.

Rabies is a deadly disease caused by a virus. The virus is found in the saliva of a rabid animal and is transmitted by a bite, or possibly by saliva contamination of an open cut or the eyes. Left untreated, rabies attacks the nervous system and causes death. Rabies can be prevented through timely post-exposure treatment for humans, and vaccination of pets.

To avoid exposure to Rabies, residents are reminded:

- Do not to approach stray or wild animals at any time,
- Vaccinate your pets against rabies and keep vaccinations up-to-date.
- Avoid contact with strays or pets other than your own.
- Report unusual behavior in stray or wild animals to municipal animal control.

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2900, Flemington NJ 08822
Tel: (908) 788-1351 Fax: (908) 782-7510
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Hunterdon County Health Department is communicating with medical care providers to ensure they have the most up to date information on rabies and that the appropriate medication is being provided to those exposed. The most dangerous and common route of rabies exposure is from the bite of a rabid mammal or exposure to their saliva.

The Health Department reminds residents to avoid contact with stray or wild animals. If residents are bitten or scratched by a wild or stray animal, they are advised to seek medical treatment immediately and report any exposures to the Health Department. It is important to remember that Rabies is fatal if left untreated but preventable with vaccines for animals or timely treatment after exposure for humans.

For more information residents are encouraged to call the Health Department at 908-788-1351. After hours and on weekends, call 908-788-1202. To reach the Lebanon Township Animal Control Officer, Laura Roerig, call 908-537-7663.