

A GUIDE TO DEALING WITH BATS FOUND IN THE HOME

Periodically personnel of the Police Department respond to incidents involving a bat. This guide may be used for other wild life found in the home. In all instances written reports of the incident are highly essential.

Bats Found in the Home

- It is recommended that the bat be retained for rabies virus testing whenever there is potential exposure to a family member or household pet.
- Advise the homeowner of companies that can be hired to capture the bat and euthanize it for testing. It is important for the head to remain intact for tissue testing.
- Advise the homeowner to contact the Bethel Health Dept. for all incidents (Monday –Friday 8:30-4:30).
- If known human contact was made with a family member, immediate post-exposure prophylaxis is advised. Contact medical care provider or emergency room at local hospital. If household pet was exposed, a veterinarian should be contacted.
- All bats captured within the household should be tested for the rabies virus if there is possible exposure or unsure contact to a family member or pet. The health department will arrange for the transportation and testing once the animal is delivered to the department. The Animal Control Officer (ACO) can also make arrangements for the animal to be transported and tested if health department staff is unavailable. Once the bat has been euthanized, it should be wrapped in newspaper and enclosed securely in a plastic bag to prevent leaking of fluids. A separate plastic bag of ice or freezer packs should be packaged with the bat to prevent spoilage. If there is a delay in transporting the bat to the health department or lab, the animal should be kept in the refrigerator. It is not recommended to freeze the animal as it may distort the tissue for accurate testing.