# NOTICE

September 13, 2021

**TO:** Persons near Lands End Road and Lands End Court in Hilton Head Island, SC

**FROM:** Wendy Boswell, Area Director
Low Country Environmental Affairs Beaufort Office
Bureau of Environmental Health Services

**SUBJECT: RABID BAT**

On September 11, 2021, a bat in your area tested POSITIVE for the rabies virus. The rabid bat is now deceased. Due to the possibility of the spread of rabies, DHEC urges you to use caution when dealing with wild or stray animals. If you have reason to believe that you, someone you know, or your pets have come in contact with this bat or another animal that potentially has rabies, please call DHEC's Environmental Affairs Beaufort office at (843) 846-1030 during normal business hours (8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday) or the DHEC after-hours service number at (888) 847-0902 (Select Option 2).

Bats can transmit rabies through bites or the introduction of saliva into open wounds or areas such as the eyes, nose, or mouth. Because bats have small teeth, their bites may go unnoticed which makes it important to identify any person or pet who has had potential contact with a bat. Similarly, never release a bat that had potential contact with a person, pet, or livestock. These bats should be safely trapped in a sealed container and not touched. Once a bat is released, it cannot be tested for rabies. Never handle a bat or any wild or stray animal, alive or dead, with your bare hands. Bat contact/exposure is defined as:

1. Waking up to find a bat in your room;
2. Finding a bat where children, pets, or persons with impaired mental capacity (intoxicated or mentally disabled) have been left unattended; and/or
3. A pet or person that has been in direct contact with a bat.

If your pet is ever found with wounds of unknown origin, please consider that your pet could have been exposed to rabies and contact the Beaufort office. This is especially important as rabies has been confirmed in your area. Take any injured pet to a veterinarian so the wounds can be treated and the administration of a rabies vaccination can be discussed.

**Please remember, proof of rabies vaccination for pets (cats, dogs, and ferrets) is required by the South Carolina Rabies Control Act.** If your pet does not have a current rabies vaccination, contact a veterinarian as soon as possible for an appointment. For more information on rabies or to find a low-cost rabies clinic in South Carolina, visit our website: www.scdhec.gov/rabies. We appreciate your cooperation in helping to reduce the spread of rabies in your community.