

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

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The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry will be conducting oral rabies vaccine (ORV) bait distribution in the summer and fall of 2019. Baiting operations will begin early July and continue until the end of October.

Please see the attached information package for:

- 1) Map of planned baiting area for 2019
- 2) Rabies Vaccine Bait Information Sheet

Per the attached map, MNRF's rabies vaccine bait distribution will be conducted in rural areas with MNRF aircraft and by hand in urban areas by MNRF wildlife technicians. The following provides details of MNRF bait distribution in 2019:

- Yellow shaded areas will be completed with a combination of Twin Otter airplane and Eurocopter EC130 helicopter. Twin Otter flights will begin August 19 through September 6, with Eurocopter EC130 flights occurring August 12-16 and September 9-13. These dates are subject to change depending on weather conditions.
- The beige shaded area will be completed by Twin Otter from September 28-October 4.
- Urban hand baiting, including the use of temporary feeding stations, will occur in the pink areas starting in the first week of July and continue through to the end of October.
- Preventative baiting of the purple shaded areas in eastern Ontario will take place in mid-August and will take one day to complete.

In addition to the activities mentioned above, MNRF may conduct localized rapid response baiting measures which will only take place in the event of a raccoon or fox strain rabies case outside of the planned baiting area.

The ministry is committed to the research, surveillance, control and elimination of this recent outbreak of rabies in southwestern Ontario to prevent the disease from spreading. Since the start of the rabies outbreak in 2015, the first of its kind in over a decade, MNRF has taken quick action to protect communities, distributing over 4 million vaccine baits by air and ground. Since 2016, terrestrial rabies cases have declined in the province by approximately 50% each year.

Any warm-blooded animal can contract rabies. If a person contracts rabies and does not receive treatment, the disease is fatal.

The khaki-green coloured bait being distributed by hand and by aircraft is made of wax-fat with an attractant flavour (vanilla-sugar). A label with a toll-free telephone number (1-888-574-6656)

and “Do not eat” are located on the exterior of the bait and a plastic package containing the liquid rabies vaccine is embedded in the centre. If found, the bait should not be touched, but left for raccoons, skunks and foxes to consume. (See attached bait identification hand out for detailed description.)

Ontario’s rabies control program is a joint effort that receives important input and contributions from a variety of partners across the province. Partnerships with provincial ministries, federal agencies, regional health units, municipalities, wildlife rehabilitators, licensed trappers, wildlife control agents and Indigenous communities are all key to the continued success of Ontario’s rabies control program.

For further information about rabies in Ontario, please visit Ontario.ca/rabies or contact MNRF’s rabies information line at 1-888-574-6656.

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