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# SAFETY ALERT

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No. 10-01

BAT RABIES PRECAUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 2010

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The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported an increase of rabies in bats in Los Angeles County this year, with the majority being found in the Santa Clarita Valley area. Because of this increase and since bats are commonly found in public venues, the Department of Public Health wants to remind the public to avoid handling wildlife, especially bats. In nature, less than 1 in 1000 to 10,000 bats are infected with rabies, but when a sick bat is found, the risk is higher.

As a precaution, the following steps should be taken to reduce the risk of rabies:

- Do not try to pet or directly handle any wildlife, especially bats.
- If a bat is found do not touch it; place a box over it and call your local animal control agency.
- If a bat is found on school grounds and may have had access to pets or areas where people were sleeping, do not release it outside. If possible, put a small box or container over it and call your local animal control agency.
- Immediately consult with your physician if you are bitten by wildlife, to determine if you need rabies post-exposure treatment.
- Make sure any pets on campus are up-to-date on rabies vaccination.
- Report any animal bites or wildlife exposures to your pets to Veterinary Public Health & Rabies Control Program at (213) 989-7060 or call the 24-Hour Hotline at (877) 747-2243.

For additional information visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Diseases/Rabies.htm>. If you have questions, contact the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) at 213-241-3199.

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