



Press Release



Bristol Tennessee Police Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 18, 2018

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Rabies bait immunization program announced by USDA for East Tennessee

The City of Bristol has been made aware of a United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Tennessee Department of Health implementation of a program to immunize wild raccoons for rabies with a goal to stop the spread of raccoon variant rabies in Tennessee.

Beginning on Tuesday, October 2, 2018 the USDA will begin placing an oral rabies vaccine inside a fishmeal block. Aircraft will distribute the vaccine. Raccoons that eat the vaccine-laced bait become immune to rabies. There will be two separate bait zones, one being the Appalachian Ridge in upper east Tennessee. With good weather, the USDA anticipates completion of distribution within 20 days.

The USDA is advising the certain precautions be taken in the event the baits are found by persons or pets. If your pet finds the bait do not attempt removal of the bait, it will not harm your pet. Wear gloves or use a towel when you pick up bait you may have found. Although there is no harm in touching undamaged bait, they have a strong fishmeal smell. Wash your hand thoroughly with soap and water if there is any chance that the vaccine sachet has been ruptured. If a person or pet is exposed to the vaccine contained with the bait, call the toll-free number on the bait 1-800-722-6725 to report the bait contact.

For more information on the USDA program taking place locally please contact Major Tim Eads at 423-989-5600 or email teads@bristoltn.org.