

# Animal Control and Rabies Prevention:

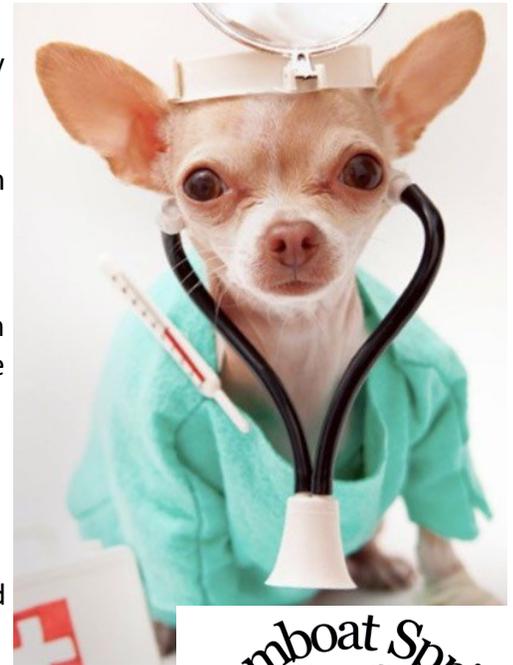
Cartoons, Movies, and children's books have made Animal Control Officers the bad guys/gals, but in reality they play a critical role in protecting our neighborhoods. It is part of their job to investigate bite incidents, involving animals. Animal Control has the expertise to deal with potential rabies exposure risks to the public. Don't hesitate to call Animal Control when you see an animal bite occur, or if an animal (domesticated or wild) is seen acting strangely.

Did you know, Colorado State Law requires that anyone with knowledge of an animal bite on a human must report it. When Animal Control responds to a bite incident, they always have the human's and animal's health in mind. Animal Control follows the proper protocol to ensure the bite victim's health. This includes the quarantine and evaluation of the bite animal's health, which ensures the health and safety of the community moving forward. Make sure you and your family members know how to contact Animal Control.

## **What is Rabies:**

Rabies is a disease that affects the brain. It's usually passed from animal to animal, but it can be passed from animals to humans. Rabies is a viral disease of the nervous system of warm-blooded animals, usually transmitted from the bite of a rabid "infected" mammal. Rabies is fatal if the virus reaches the brain. Any mammal can get rabies. It can only be passed to another animal or a person through saliva.

You can't always tell if an animal has rabies just by looking at it. If the animal is acting strangely, this could be an indication that it may have rabies. Some animal may act aggressive, timid, shy, or may excessively drool, when infected with rabies. Wild animals with rabies may act more tame and move slowly. It may be easy to approach a wild animal acting that way, but stay back. These are not normal behaviors for animals, remember that something could be wrong.



**Rabies is 100% preventable. Animals can be vaccinated and people who have been bitten can receive vaccines to fight the disease.**

## **Keep your Pet Safe and Have the Rabies Certificate:**

The best way to make sure your pet is safe, is to get it vaccinated for rabies and keep it current. Be sure they wear their rabies tag and an identification tag with your name and telephone number on their collar. Within the City of Steamboat, cats and dogs are required to wear a Routt County License. It's a great time, at the start of each new year, to make sure your pet is up to date when buying this license. Keeping your pets away from wildlife will reduce the chance of them being bitten by an animal with rabies. Always walk your dog on a leash, and keep dogs in a fenced yard if they're not on a leash. Consider keeping your cats and small mammals indoors. Getting your pets spayed or neutered can also make it less likely they'll leave home and become stray.

Possession of a rabies vaccination certificate is the owner's only proof, besides veterinary records, that their animal has been vaccinated. Dogs and cats are generally given a tag to wear after a rabies vaccination is administered. A current rabies certificate must be provided to Animal Control in a bite incident. The rabies certificate may be necessary to save your pet's life; if it bites a person, bites an animal, or is bitten by another animal.