



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

1493 CAMBRIDGE STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

Melvin H. Chalfen, M.D.
Commissioner

Robert W. Healy
City Manager
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

January 21, 1993

Council Order #8
January 11, 1993

Dear Mr. Healy;

The prediction last spring that the disease rabies in raccoons was spreading into western Massachusetts was a subject of great concern. In fact the spread eastward was rapid and rabid raccoons were identified in Belmont in December and in Cambridge and Arlington in January.

Recommendations on this issue are based on discussion and planning between the Animal Commission, Health and Hospitals, the Water Department and the Manager's office. The Police and Fire Departments have been involved as well as EMT (Emergency Medical Technicians) organizations. In addition the Commonwealth has developed a 1993 Rabies Control Plan for Cities and Towns. The School Department has the curriculum and educational material provided for school children by the state to teach children to avoid wild life and stray animals.

The most important measures are the education of the population, vaccination of dogs and cats, control of stray animal population and the tight containment of trash in its containers. Information that the disease has spread to the local area and information about preventing exposure has been shown to prevent a very high percentage of exposures and disease.

Information from fact sheets and brochures from the state and from the city have been developed. Similar information is included in the material sent to the School Department. Newspaper coverage has begun and will be continued. Messages for distribution by cable-TV have been sent.

Additional clinics for vaccination of cats and dogs have been held and more will be offered. Rabies vaccination of dogs has been mandatory for years. Cat vaccination will also be mandatory by state law by the end of February but it is strongly recommended that cat vaccination be done immediately.

Robert W. Healy

Council Order #8

January 21, 1993

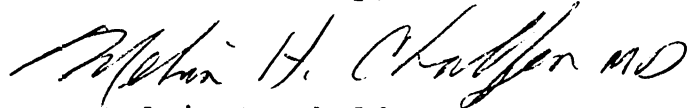
Neither cats nor dogs should be allowed to run loose.

In this regard and after consultation with Massachusetts Department of Public Health veterinarians, rabies control officers, with you and with other Cambridge officials I issued a regulation to keep dogs on leashes at the Fresh Pond Reservation.

Since raccoons and other wild animals are attracted to areas in their search for food trash cans should be tightly covered and other measures taken to avoid food sources in outdoor areas.

Chimneys should be capped and openings into houses and garages should be sealed to prevent raccoons from entering or building dens.

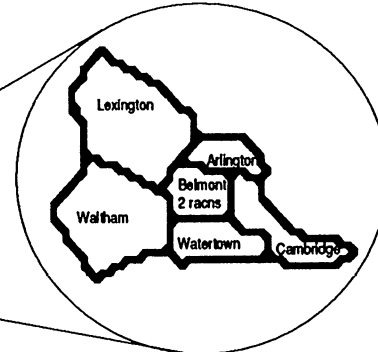
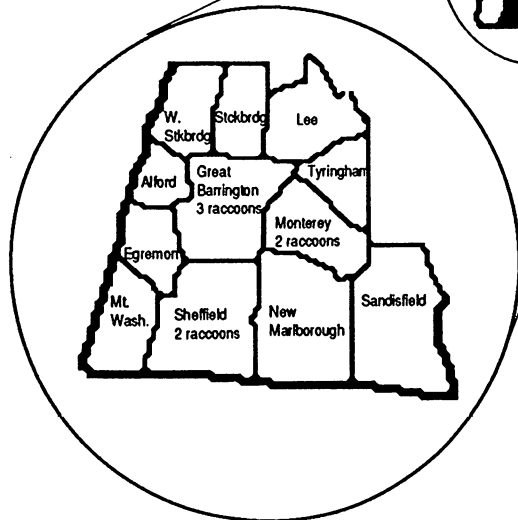
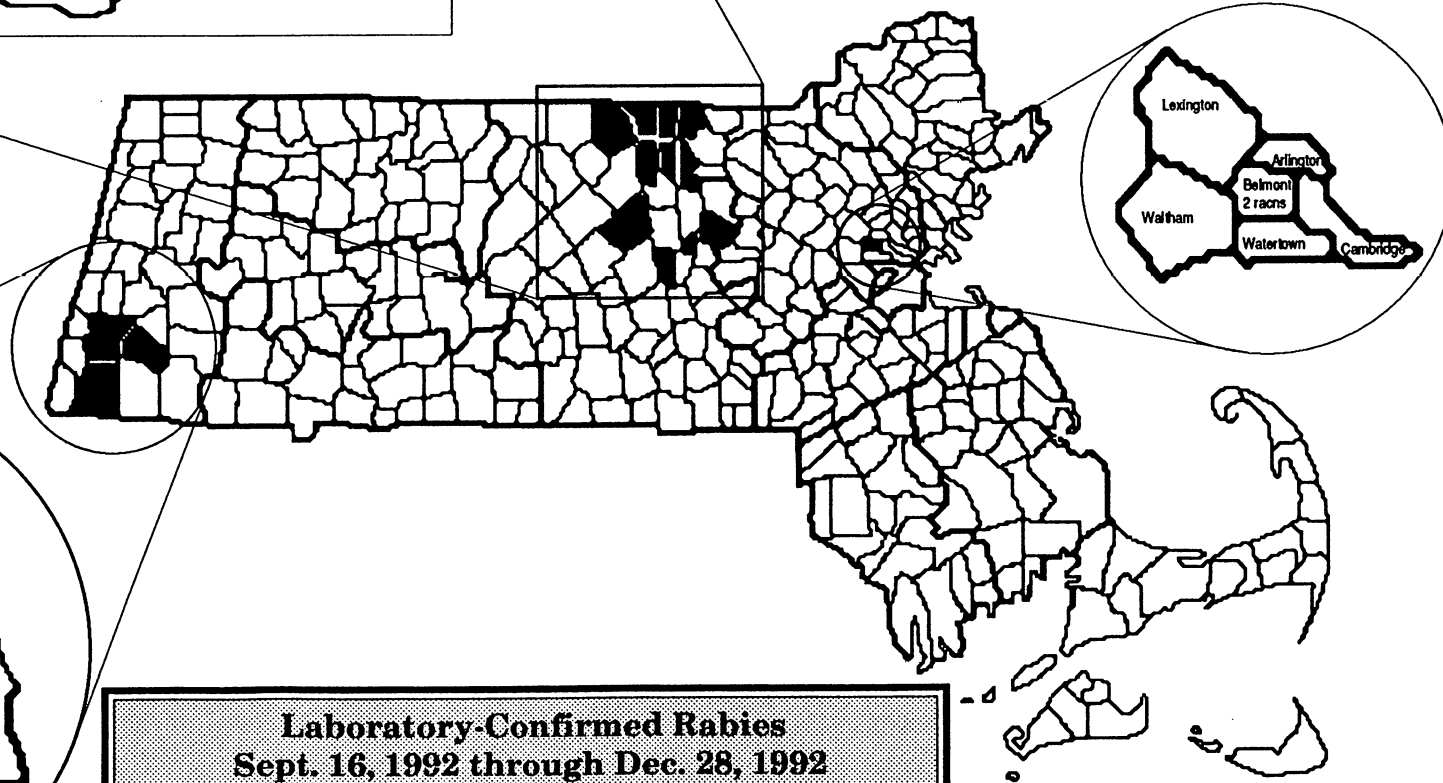
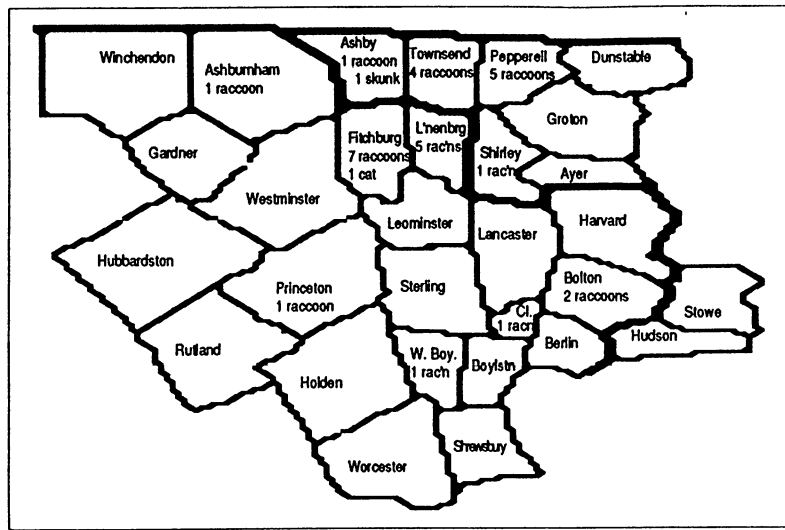
Yours sincerely,



Melvin H. Chalfen, M.D.
Commissioner

MHC:vs
Attachments.

MID-ATLANTIC STRAIN OF *RACCOON RABIES* IN MASSACHUSETTS 1992



Laboratory-Confirmed Rabies Sept. 16, 1992 through Dec. 28, 1992					
	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Cum.
Raccoon	5	7	7	19	38
Skunk	0	1	0	0	1
Cat	0	0	1	0	1
Woodchuck	0	0	0	1	1

RABIES ALERT

STAY AWAY FROM WILD
ANIMALS ESPECIALLY:

- RACCOONS
- FOXES
- SKUNKS
- BATS
- ANY ANIMAL
THAT APPEARS
ILL OR ABNORMAL



TELL AN ADULT:

- IF YOU FIND ANY OF THESE ANIMALS
- IF YOU ARE BITTEN

VACCINATE DOGS & CATS

Evidence grows of rabid raccoons

By Bob Höhler
GLOBE STAFF

At first glance, the raccoon sitting in the middle of Common Street in Belmont yesterday appeared peaceful.

But no sooner had Rick Bemis, a town highway foreman, stopped his pickup on the residential street near Cushing Square than the raccoon attacked him, lunging at his door and climbing toward his open window, he said.

Rolling up his window with one hand, Bemis shoved the transmission into reverse and lurched the truck backward, shaking off the frenzied animal long enough to radio town officials with the news: He had probably encountered a rabid raccoon.

If Bemis were right, the raccoon would be the third detected with rabies this month in Belmont, evidence that a wide-ranging and dangerous epidemic of raccoon

RABIES, Page 24

Boston Globe

12/31/92

THE BOSTON GLOBE • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1992

Evidence growing of rabid raccoons

■ RABIES

Continued from Page 1

rabies has reached Greater Boston, according to public health officials.

The epidemic, which began in West Virginia 15 years ago, particularly threatens the state's urban and suburban areas, where raccoons, in their quest for food, live in numbers 10 times greater than they do in rural areas, authorities said.

"It's frightening when you consider the numbers," said Dr. Mike McGuill, an epidemiologist and veterinarian for the state Department of Public Health. "But people need not be alarmed if they take the proper precautions and make sure their neighborhoods are not friendly places for raccoons to live."

To date, 39 cases of raccoon rabies have been confirmed in 15 Massachusetts communities, from Belmont to Great Barrington in the Berkshires.

And Bemis apparently risked be-

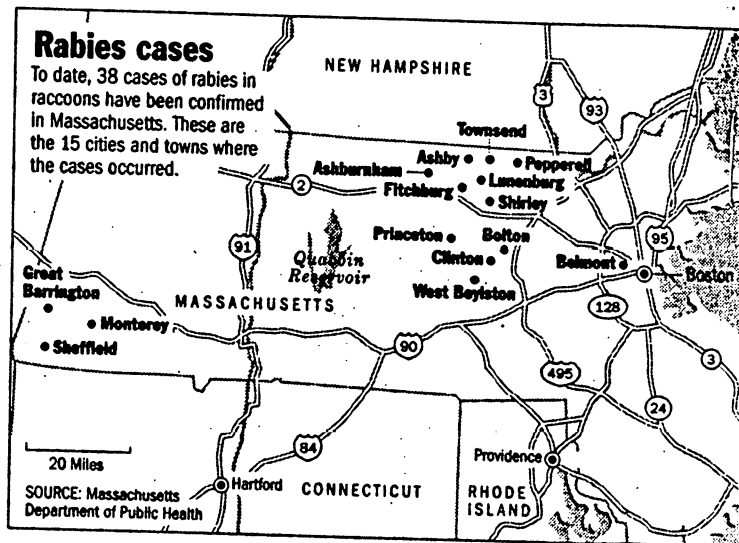
coming the sixth human in the state exposed to the disease. A key sign that an animal may be rabid is aggressive behavior or other strange actions, authorities said.

"I've seen a lot of wildlife, dead and alive, in my day," Bemis said later. "But I've never had one come at me like that. It had no fear, that's for sure. It was scary."

Since the state's first case of raccoon rabies was reported in Ashby, north of Fitchburg, on Sept. 14, diseased raccoons are suspected of exposing the virus to five adults, including a veterinarian in Great Barrington and an animal control officer in nearby Monterey.

All five adults are receiving a series of vaccinations to ward off the disease, which, if untreated, is "100 percent fatal," McGuill said.

The rabies disease, generally transmitted through a bite wound, affects the central nervous system and spreads through the spinal cord to the brain, where it causes fatal en-



GLOBE STAFF MAP

cephalitis.

Other than a man who contracted rabies in Nigeria and died here in 1983, no one has died of rabies in Massachusetts since 1934. And the last death of a rabid dog occurred in 1949.

But the danger to humans and domestic animals has not been greater since dog rabies was eradicated in the early 20th century, authorities said.

In less than four months, rabid raccoons already are known to have exposed a dozen dogs to the virus and to have infected a cat, a skunk and a woodchuck. An additional 500 to 1,000 cases of animal rabies are expected in the state within the next year, said Carter Luke, vice president of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

"There's a grave public health and animal health risk with this epidemic," Luke said. "We need to build as strong a barrier as we can between wildlife and people."

As a primary precaution, all dogs and cats should be vaccinated against rabies, as state law requires, authorities said.

Cats pose a particular danger, McGull said, because for every dog infected with rabies during the current epidemic, 10 cats have become rabid. Rabid cats are also more likely to act aggressively toward humans than are rabid dogs, he said.

For greater protection, public health officials recommend that residents try to keep raccoons out of their neighborhoods by making garbage inaccessible, screening chimney tops and tightly sealing attics and cellars.

And should an animal suspected of carrying the rabies virus bite or scratch someone, the victim should immediately wash the wound with soap and water and call a doctor.

Three such incidents have occurred to date.

In Lunenburg near Fitchburg, a man shot a raccoon he spotted last month in his dog's pen. When his two sons carried away the raccoon's carcass, the animal bled on them, prompting health officials who determined the raccoon was rabid to recommend the sons receive the six-part rabies vaccination series.

In Monterey, after a dog mauled a rabid raccoon, public health officials recommended treatment for the dog's owner and the town's animal control officer, each of whom handled the dog afterward and may have been exposed to the virus through blood or saliva.

The veterinarian in Great Barrington began the vaccination series after she accidentally cut herself while decapitating a raccoon that proved to be rabid.

Under state guidelines, the heads of animals suspected of carrying the rabies virus are shipped to the state public health laboratory for testing.

People who see dead, sick or injured animals should stay away from them and call police or their local animal control officer.

In Belmont, where an animal control officer yesterday began searching for the raccoon that lunged at Bemis' truck, officials warned residents of the incident, cautioning them to steer clear of wildlife and keep their dogs leashed.

"Unfortunately, the problem's only going to get worse," said John Malone, the town's health director. "We've been planning for two years to fight this, but raccoon rabies apparently is here to stay for a while."

WILDLIFE RABIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

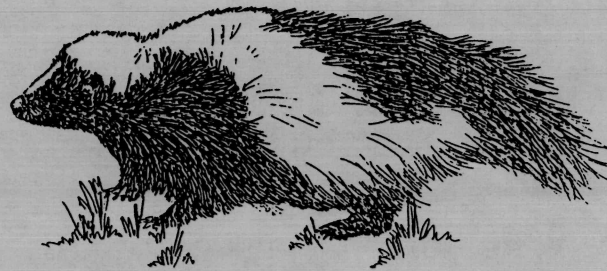
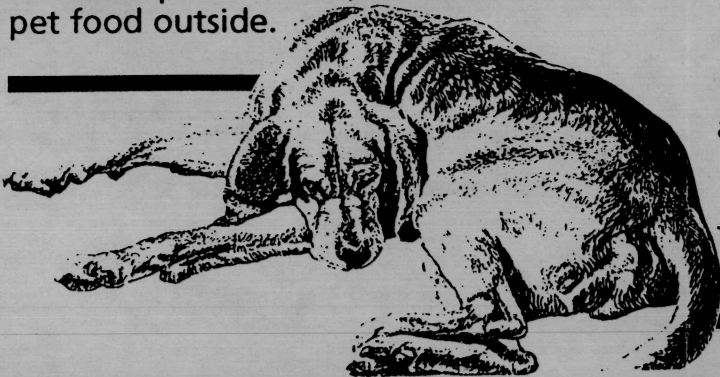
Rabies is a virus that affects the nervous system of mammals. If left untreated it is always fatal.

Rabies has occurred in Massachusetts periodically since the early 1800's. It has, from time to time shown up in dogs, cats, foxes and bats. Rabies currently occurs occasionally in bats, approximately 3-10% of bats annually submitted test positive for rabies. Since 1977 raccoon rabies has been spreading through the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states. Rabies can also be carried by foxes, skunks, cats, dogs, and domestic livestock.

Rabies is spread through a bite or a scratch from an infected animal. You can protect yourself and your family by observing some precautions, and following a few simple rules.

PET OWNERS:

- Pets are the most likely bridge between wildlife rabies and people. Vaccinate cats and dogs for rabies.
- Dogs and cats may come in contact with raccoons and may be bitten or scratched. Keep pets restrained at all times.
- Feed pets indoors, do not leave pet food outside.



CAMPERS, HIKERS, PICNICKERS:

- Do not feed wild animals.
- Do not approach or handle wild animals.
- Secure your food and garbage so that wild animals will not have access to them.

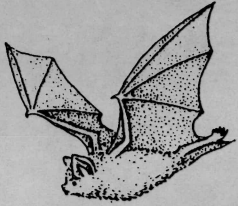
HOUSEHOLDERS:

- Do not approach or handle wild animals.
- Do not feed wild animals.
- Secure garbage and trash in trash containers with tight fitting lids.
- Place trash out for pickup on the same day it will be picked up by rubbish collectors.
- Cap chimneys with screens.
- Seal openings in attics, basements, porches, and sheds or barns.



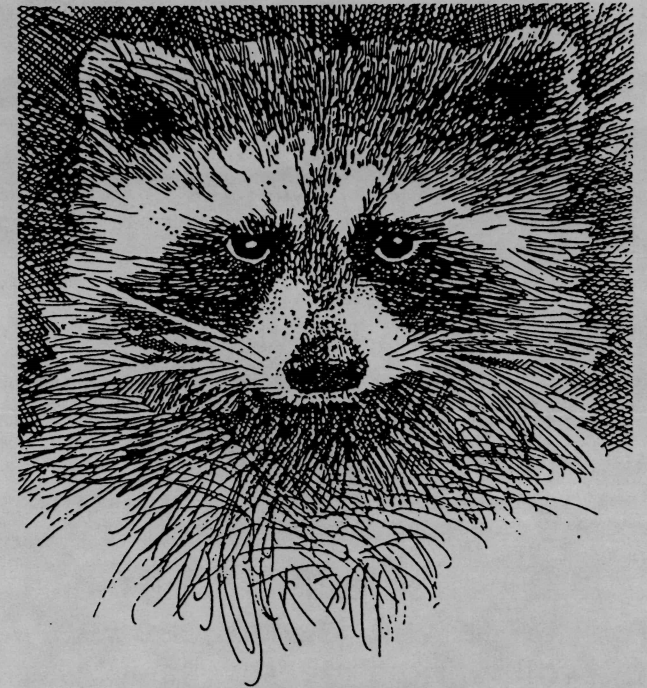
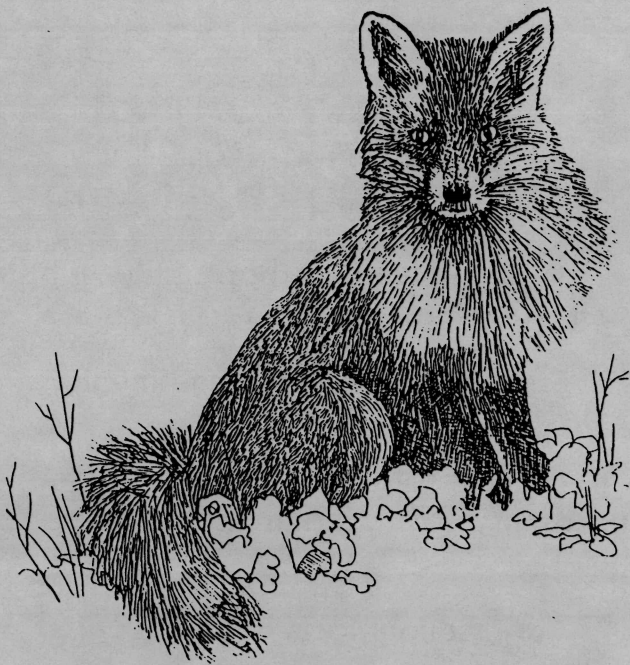
IF YOU HAVE CONTACT WITH AN ANIMAL SUSPECTED OF BEING RABID:

- ✎ Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water.
 - ❖ Seek medical attention immediately.
 - ☑ If possible, capture, kill or confine the animal without damaging the head.
 - ☎ Contact your local health department.
-



**THE DIVISION OF
FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
WORKS
TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC
BY:**

- Monitoring outbreaks of wildlife disease.
- Sharing information with humane and animal health authorities.
- Prohibiting the importation or relocation of wildlife and possession of wildlife as pets.
- Regulating wildlife population through the harvest of animals by licensed hunters and trappers.
- Increasing public awareness of wildlife through education.



WILDLIFE
RABIES

**IN
MASSACHUSETTS**

**WHAT YOU
SHOULD KNOW**

CAMBRIDGE WATER DEPARTMENT

Rabies: Questions and Answers

What is the Emergency Regulation?

The regulation, attached, requires dogs to be leashed at Fresh Pond.

Why is the Emergency Regulation necessary?

Rabies is on the increase. Recently, rabid raccoons have been found in Belmont and around Fresh Pond. If your dog is not on its leash, it is more likely to encounter a raccoon at Fresh Pond. If that raccoon is rabid, your dog is in great danger of attack and illness.

What is Chapter 111, Section 31?

This is a State law that allows Boards of Health to make reasonable regulations to protect the public health. A copy of the law is attached.

Why can't the City just get rid of the raccoons?

State law also prohibits interference with wildlife. The attached bulletin from the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife discusses the practical reasons for the law. It specifically states: "Rabies in raccoons is spreading throughout the eastern United States. Moving animals from one area to another may spread this disease."

The Water Department has installed new trash collection receptacles and implemented procedures that have already helped to limit the food supply for raccoons and rats. When the food supply is limited, wildlife often leaves in search of sustenance.

What can I do to avoid the harm of rabies?

The attached pamphlet describes a number of steps that you can take to avoid this problem. Generally, do not go near any raccoon that you see at Fresh Pond. If you have reason to believe that one you have seen is rabid, please call the Animal Commission (349-4376) or stop in and tell us at the Water Department.

EMERGENCY REGULATION

**DUE TO POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF RABID
RACCOONS, ALL DOGS MUST BE LEASHED WHILE
ON THE FRESH POND RESERVATION.**

THIS REGULATION IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

PER ORDER OF:

**MELVIN H. CHALFEN, M.D.
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH & HOSPITALS**

IN ACCORDANCE WITH G.L. CHAPTER 111, SEC. 31

EMERGENCY REGULATION

PUBLIC HEALTH

mination of need for project involving renovation and new construction was not arbitrary or capricious, where amount expended in relocation of center to hospital grounds, even if it would not be recouped in form of rent, was less than amount needed to trigger determination of need requirement for capital expenditure and arthritis center remained part of building not covered by hospital's determination of need application and only minimal expenditures for some refurbishing of space were made in setting up center. *Howe v. Health Services Appeals Bd.* (1985) 481 N.E.2d 510, 20 pp. 531.

jurisdiction, upon request of the health planning agency, or of any ten provisions of sections twenty-five C to twenty-six shall subject the violator to a fine of one hundred dollars for each day of such violation of such provisions also shall include modifying or revoking the license of a

Notes

St. c. 23, was approved April 21, 1988. Emergency declaration by the Governor was made on the same date.

Care facilities

provide that either a resident or pharmacist return to the pharmacy from which it was dispensed which medication is sealed in unopened original period of shelf life, and unexpired controlled substance as defined in section 27B shall permit the pharmacy to which such medication was dispensed to return such medication, and shall be returned to such returned medication.

Notes

St. c. 23, was approved April 21, 1988. Emergency declaration by the Governor was made on the same date.

PUBLIC HEALTH

provisions of this section notwithstanding sections twenty-five A and twenty-five B, a septic system installer or member of health may engage or work at a site over which the board of health has jurisdiction, provided, however, that neither the

PUBLIC HEALTH

111 § 31

board of health member nor the board shall inspect a septic system installation done by said board of health member, or said member's partner, employer, employee or co-employee. The inspection of work so done shall be performed either by the board of health of another city, town or district or by a special assistant health agent who is appointed solely for the purpose of performing such inspections by the mayor of a city, the board of selectmen of a town or the governing board of a district. If the board of selectmen also serves as the board of health, said septic system installer shall not participate in the appointment of special assistant health agent.

This section shall take effect upon its acceptance in a city, by the vote of the city council, subject to the provisions of the charter of such city; in a town, by a vote of town meeting; in a municipality having a town council form of government, by a vote of the town council, subject to the provisions of the charter of such municipality; and, in a district, by the vote as above provided of the cities and towns of the districts.

Added by St.1988, c. 121.

Historical and Statutory Notes

1988 Legislation

St.1988, c. 121, an emergency act, was approved July 14, 1988.

§ 30. Agents; appointment; inspections

Code of Massachusetts Regulations

Food establishments, state sanitary code, suspension or revocation of permits, see 105 CMR 590.054.

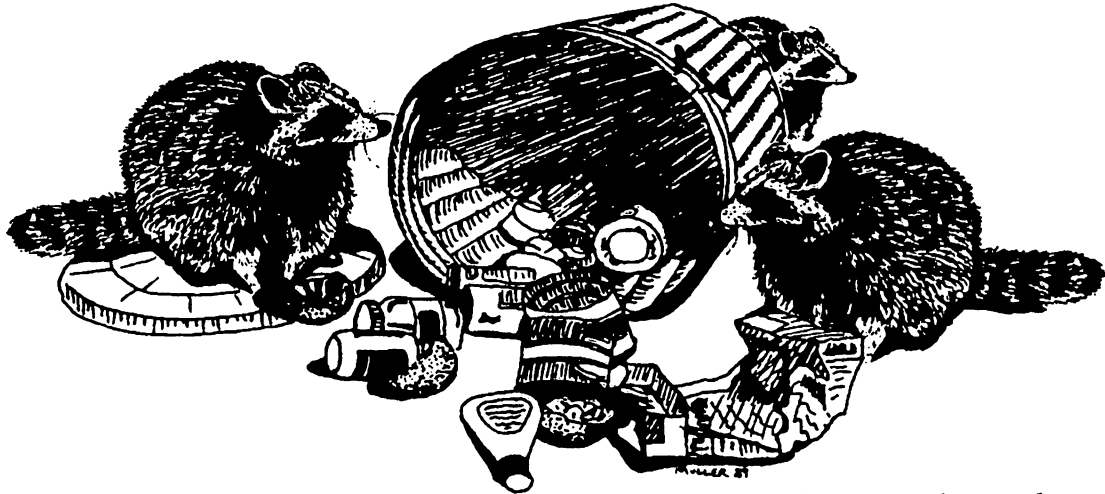
§ 31. Health regulations; publication; filing sanitary codes and related rules, etc.

Boards of health may make reasonable health regulations. A summary which shall describe the substance of any regulation made by a board of health under this chapter shall be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town, and such publication shall be notice to all persons. No regulation or amendment thereto which relates to the minimum requirements for subsurface disposal of sanitary sewage as provided by the state environmental code shall be adopted until such time as the board of health shall hold a public hearing thereon, notice of the time, place and subject matter of which, sufficient for identification, shall be given by publishing in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be not less than fourteen days prior to the date set for such hearing, or if there is no such newspaper in such city or town, then by posting notice in a conspicuous place in the city or town hall for a period of not less than fourteen days prior to the date set for such hearing. Prior to the adoption of any such regulation or amendment which exceeds the minimum requirements for subsurface disposal of sanitary sewage as provided by the state environmental code, a board of health shall state at said public hearing the local conditions which exist or reasons for exceeding such minimum requirements. Whoever, himself or by his servant or agent, or as the servant or agent of any other person or any firm or corporation, violates any reasonable health regulation, made under authority of this section, for which no penalty by way of fine or imprisonment, or both, is provided by law, shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

Boards of health shall file with the department of environmental protection, attested copies of sanitary codes, and all rules, regulations and standards which have been adopted, and any amendments and additions thereto, for the maintenance of a central register pursuant to section eight of chapter twenty-one A.

Amended by St.1985, c. 70; St.1990, c. 177, § 169; St.1990, c. 438.

MOVING WILD ANIMALS IS AGAINST THE LAW!



Capturing a wild animal and releasing it in another area is prohibited by Massachusetts law. Rabies in raccoons is spreading throughout the eastern United States. Moving animals from one area to another may spread this disease to new areas. To protect people and wildlife,

Do Not Relocate Problem Wildlife!

Wild animals sometimes damage homes, gardens and lawns. Often people want to catch the problem animals and release them someplace else. Massachusetts law prohibits moving any live wild animal from one area to another. This law has been in effect for many years, protecting both humans and wildlife.

Here are some reasons wild animals should not be relocated:

- * **Capturing a wild animal and releasing it somewhere else may spread disease(s) into populations of animals (including pets) that did not have the disease(s) previously.** Diseases such as Rabies and Canine Distemper have been spread by people who captured an animal in one area and released it somewhere else.
- * **Wild animals already live where you release your problem animal.** Wherever you plan to release a problem animal, there are already resident animals with established territories competing among themselves for food and denning sites. When a new animal is introduced, competition for these limited resources is intensified, causing increased social stress and conflict within the resident population, as well as hardship or death for the introduced animal.
- * **Relocated animals often return to where you caught them.** Squirrels, raccoons and other wildlife can return from translocations of 5, 10, or even 15 miles. Such animals are more likely to be killed by automobiles or succumb to other accidents as they cross unfamiliar areas while attempting to return to their original territories.
- * **Relocation only transfers your problem to someone else.** In an unfamiliar territory, an animal accustomed to living near people is likely to seek out human habitations and damage someone else's property.
- * **Moving an animal does not solve the problem.** Within a short period of time, other individuals of the same or another species will move in, unless food (garbage, pet food, grain) is removed, and access to gardens, chimneys and attics is blocked.

Information on methods or techniques to control damage caused by wildlife is available by contacting :

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Acton 508-263-4347 Bourne 508-759-3406 West Boylston 508-835-3607

Belchertown 413-323-7632 Pittsfield 413-447-9789





CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300
FAX 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

January 25, 1993

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 30, regarding a report on animals with rabies, received from Dr. Melvin H. Chalfen, Commissioner of Health & Hospitals, relative to this issue.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Consent Agenda Item # 15

S-40

Awaiting Report Item # 30 regarding a reprot
on animals with rabies.

In City Council,

January 25, 1993

Placed on file