Raccoon Vaccination Will Start April 25, 2005

Chardon, Ohio. – April 5, 2005 – The United States Department of Agriculture, Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources will begin vaccinating raccoons for rabies in Lake and Geauga counties and parts of Cuyahoga County. The Geauga County General Health District will be assisting with the vaccination program in Geauga County beginning Monday, April 25.

A raccoon is vaccinated by eating bait containing the vaccine. Both ground baiting (using vehicles in more densely populated areas) and aerial baiting (using a low-flying airplane in rural areas) will be used in Geauga, Lake and Cuyahoga counties. On average, one bait is found for every 3.3 acres.

The bait is not harmful to humans, pets, or livestock. The bait is made of fishmeal, an ingredient in animal feed, so it is not harmful to touch intact bait. If you find intact bait near your home, leave it alone. However, if the bait is out in the open or where contact by pets or children is possible, put on gloves and toss it into deeper cover. If the bait is broken open or damaged, wear gloves or protect your hands by using a paper towel or plastic bag before picking it up and discarding it.

Important Reminders:

- Keep dogs and cats inside or on leashes for several days after your area has been baited. Most bait will be gone in about 3 days.
- Tell your children about the raccoon vaccination program and tell them to leave any bait alone.
- Do not handle partially eaten or damaged bait with bare hands.
- Damaged bait should be placed in a baggie and disposed of in normal trash.
- If you touch the bait or the liquid vaccine (red fluid inside the bait), thoroughly wash your hands or exposed skin with soap and water.

For more information contact the Geauga County Health District at (440) 285-2222 ext. 6578

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