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DOC'S DESK

This year has been extremely good with respect to rabies. We have had only two cases, a skunk in Hansford Co. reported in February and a skunk in Hall County, reported in June. The Hall County case is the first reported rabid animal since a bat and skunk were reported there in October, 2008.

Last year we had 11 cases by this point, and 17 for the year. While we hope it remains quiet here, the rest of the state is experiencing some activity, but at a slower pace statewide than a year ago. As of June 13, approximately 390 cases have been recorded this year with 184 being skunks and 157 bats. A year ago the statewide total was 526, of which 311 were skunks and 159 were bats. It is interesting how the bat numbers are staying relatively constant from roughly the first half of 2015 to the same period in 2016, but the skunk numbers have dropped off. Perhaps the skunk population has been reduced by the disease to the point that less transmission is occurring and fewer skunks exist to be infected. Bat populations seem to suffer less from the effect of the disease.

At this point, skunks are the primary species being reported statewide, with all but three Regions (6/5S, 8, and 9/10) recording decreases in reported cases. HSR 9/10 has seen a 62% increase in rabid animals, with all the increase being skunks.

Even though rabies is not highly active right now, please be sure to remind people to maintain current rabies vaccinations for their pets. As always, horses and other livestock that live where the skunks roam should be evaluated for rabies vaccination. Value, frequency of human contact, cost of disposal, etc. are all factors to consider in the benefit/cost analysis to decide whether or not to vaccinate an animal that is not required by law to be immunized.

As stated in the last newsletter, the 'new kid' in the Arbovirus world this year is the Zika virus. It was first found in Africa in 1947, but only became a public health concern within the last year as it spread rapidly across Brazil and into many

Latin American and Caribbean countries. It is similar to other arboviruses in that the majority of people who become infected do not know it. But Zika's association with a birth defect causing very small heads, (microcephaly) and consequently small brains in newborns, and the Guillain-Barre syndrome (a form of paralysis) has increased the level of concern about this virus. HSR 1 is not a known habitat for a significant population of the mosquitoes (*Aedes spp.*) that carry Zika, chikungunya or dengue viruses, but there may be an undetected population present. One of the reasons they have not been detected may be that the traps that are specific for these species have not been used in the Region until this year.

The prevention message is generally the same as the 4 Ds, except with the *Aedes*, the issue is not about the mosquitoes biting predominantly at Dawn and Dusk, but throughout the day. They also prefer to be near or in dwellings. As of 6/15/16, Texas had 44 cases recorded, of which 43 were imported via travelers. The only local transmission has been through sexual contact. Harris County leads the state in cases at the present time. Region 1 just reported its first imported case in Lubbock County.

Please remember that our mosquitoes still pose a danger, whether it is from WNV, SLE, DENV, CHIKV, or Zika. Locally, WNV will be our primary concern this summer and fall and the same mosquito control and self-protection steps that were emphasized for WNV, apply to Zika. If trapping indicates a significant population of the *Aedes spp.* in the Region, then the potential for one of the "newer" viruses to be transmitted from an infected traveler to a local citizen will increase.

The use of larvicides to prevent the development of adult mosquitoes is a more effective method of controlling those insects than spraying for adults. This is especially true with *Aedes spp.* since they prefer to be in or near habitats where the normal spraying methods are not as effective, compared to the *Culex spp.* which carry WNV.

More information on arboviruses may be accessed at: <http://texaszika.org/> and <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/arboviral/>

We hope everyone's year is going well and the summer will be enjoyable and the Region experiences adequate moisture.

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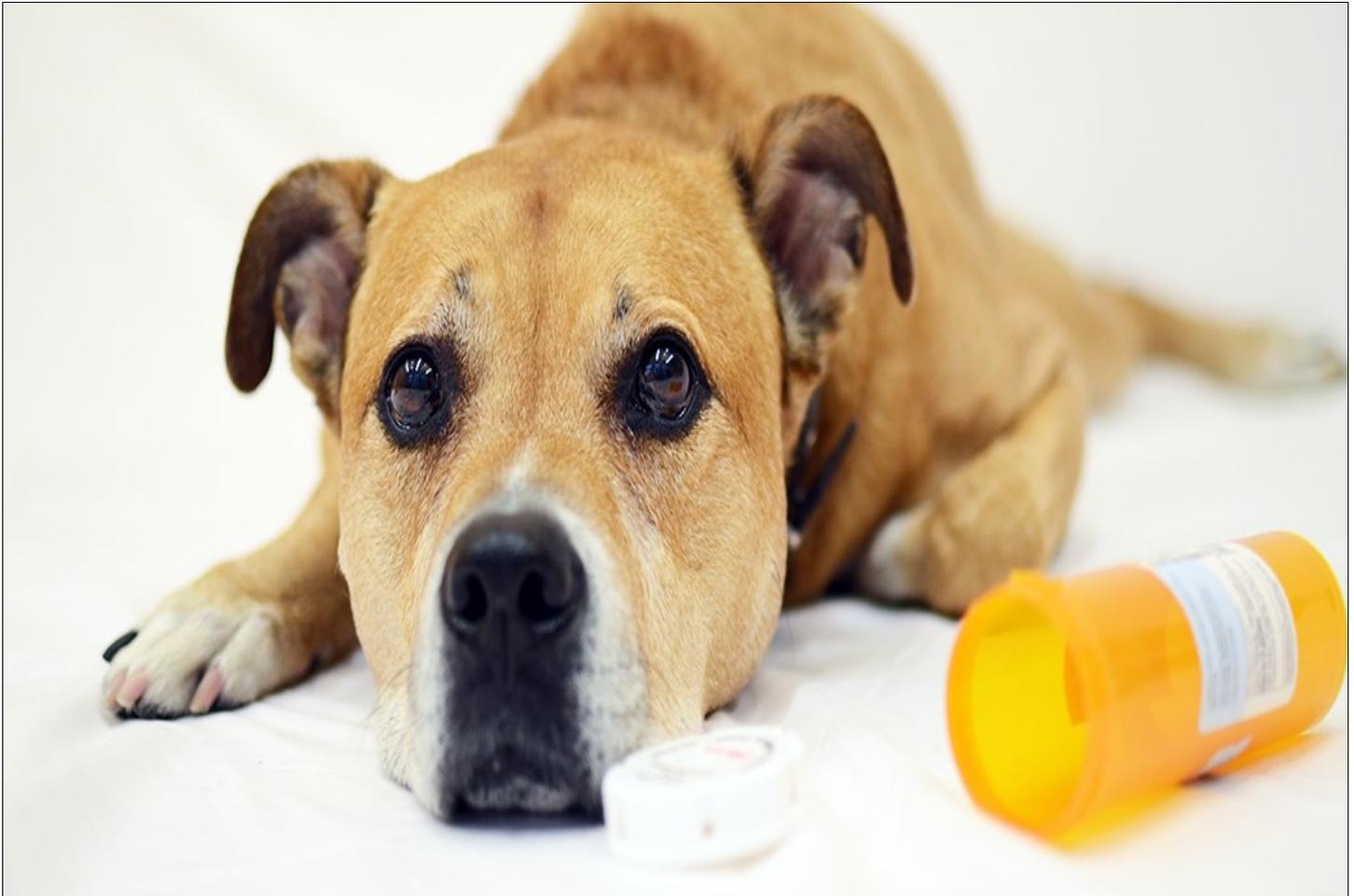
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Announcing the Top Pet Toxins of 2015



March is National Animal Poison Prevention Month, and we'd like to kick it off by sharing our list of toxins most commonly ingested by pets—and reported to the [ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center](#) (APCC)—in 2015. The APCC has revealed that for the first time ever, over-the-counter medications and supplements surpassed prescription medications to take the top spot. Check out the full list below!

Over-the-counter medications: These medications, including herbal and other natural supplements, attracted the most concern this year for the first time in the APCC's history, with more than 28,500 cases reported. This category is exceptionally large, [encompassing nearly 7,000 products](#).

Human prescription medications: Prescribed human medications fell to the second spot on the list, representing nearly 16% of all cases. The types of medication to which animals were most often exposed correlate with the most popular [medications prescribed to humans](#).

1. **Insecticides:** Insect poisons accounted for nearly 9% of the calls to APCC (more than 15,000 cases). If label directions are not followed, these products can be very dangerous to pets.

Human foods: Pets—especially dogs, who ingest human foods more often than cats—can get into serious trouble by ingesting onions, garlic, grapes, raisins, alcohol and xylitol. More than 14,600 APCC cases in 2015 involved [human foods](#).

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Household items: Products found around the home made up more than 14,000 cases in 2015. [The most common items](#) for this category include cleaning products, fire logs and paint.

1. **Veterinary medications:** Overdoses of medications prescribed by veterinarians represented more than 7% of total cases in 2015. Chewable medications are very appealing to pets, requiring extra caution.

Chocolate: Chocolate continues to be very problematic for pets, accounting for more than 7% of all APCC cases in 2015—averaging more than 30 cases a day. [The darker the chocolate, the more dangerous it can be.](#)

Plants: Indoor and outdoor plants represented nearly 5% of the calls to the APCC in 2015. Most of these calls involve cats and houseplants. [Be sure to understand the toxicity of plants before putting them in or around your house.](#)

1. **Rodenticides:** Rodent poisons can be just as toxic to pets as they are to the mice and rats these products are designed to kill. Last year, APCC handled more than 8,100 cases involving rodenticides.

2. **Lawn and garden products.** These products, including herbicides and fungicides, round out the top ten, accounting for 3% of all APCC calls. It's incredibly important to store lawn and garden products out of the reach of pets.

[Help spread the word! Download this handy guide featuring our top pet toxins and share it on your social media networks.](#)

[Please visit our APCC section to find out more about items that could be poisonous to your furry friends.](#) *APCC is your best resource for any animal poison-related emergency—24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you think that your pet may have ingested a potentially poisonous substance, call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435 immediately.*



**Rabies Review for Local Rabies Control Authorities,
Animal Control Officers, and Law Enforcement**

The Armory
12065 E. Frederick Ave.
Pampa, Texas
Tuesday, July 19, 2016
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

City of Lubbock Vector Control Building
102 E. Municipal Drive
Lubbock, Texas
Thursday, July 21, 2016
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

The meeting will be held at two locations for your convenience. We hope you will find this review helpful in the event that you have to investigate an animal bite or handle a rabid animal. Your knowledge of the law and the proper procedures may help save a life. Six hours of DSHS continuing education credit are approved for this class for ACOs. Approval is being sought for veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians for six hours from the High Plains and South Plains Veterinary Medical Associations. Peace officers can receive TCOLE credit but must submit their own forms.

If you have questions about the review sessions, you may contact Karen McDonald at 806/783-6422, or Dr. James Alexander and Tonya Finch at 806/477-1104. Both sessions are free and walk-ins are welcome. We would, however, like to have an estimate of attendance in order to prepare handouts for the sessions. If you plan to attend, please fill out and return the bottom portion of this form to:

Texas Department of State Health Services
Zoonosis Control Program HSR 1
WTAMU Box 60968
300 Victory Drive
Canyon TX 79016

Or fax the form to (806) 655-6448

The following individual(s) plan to attend the Rabies Review in (please circle one):

Pampa, TX on July 19, 2016

Lubbock, TX on July 21, 2016

Please print the name, agency +/-or city, and telephone number of the attendant(s) below.



Rabies Review for Local Rabies Control Authorities, Animal Control Officers, Law Enforcement, Veterinarians and Registered Veterinary Technicians

The Armory
 12065 E. Frederick Ave.
 Pampa, Texas
 Tuesday, July 19, 2016
 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
 Co-sponsored by High Plains Veterinary Medical Association

LUBBOCK VECTOR CONTROL
 102 E Municipal Drive
 Lubbock, Texas
 Thursday, July 21, 2016
 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
 Co-sponsored by South Plains Veterinary Medical Association

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- 8:30 – 9:00 Building Open for Sign-In, seating and welcome.....Dr. James Alexander
 - 9:00-10:00 Epidemiology of Rabies.....Dr. James Alexander
 - 10:00–11:00 Responsibility of the Local Rabies Control AuthorityKaren McDonald
 *Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 826: Rabies Control Act
 *Texas Administrative Code Chapter 169: Rules of the Board
 - 11:00-11:30 Conducting an Investigation & Rabies Case Investigation Form.....Karen McDonald
 - 11:30-12:00 Bite Scenarios Worksheet.....Group Project
 - 12:00-1:00 Lunch
 - 1:00-1:30 Rabies Specimen Submission: Head Removal and Packing Video
 - 1:30-2:00 Austin Rabies Laboratory: specimen receiving and reporting.....Tonya Finch
 - 2:00-2:30 Status of Rabies in Texas.....Dr. James Alexander
 - 2:30-3:00 Oral Rabies Vaccine Project (ORVP).....Dr. James Alexander
 - 3:00-4:00 Arbovirus Update (WNV, SLE, Zika, Dengue, and ChikV).....Zoonosis Staff

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Tracking Your Continuing Education (CE) Hours

A draft tracking sheet has been provided for your use and a sample form with two examples is seen below. It shows tracking for someone with a Basic test date prior to July 1, 2008, (A) and a more recent one. (B) The actual test day becomes the renewal date three years later. Classes are documented on the sheet and the certificate (or copy) is placed in order behind it. Once the three-year deadline has been reached and at least 30 hours have been accumulated, the officer's approved training status is renewed for another three years, and the CE count returns to zero. Failing to accumulate 30 CEUs results in the loss of the approved status. Another basic course must be taken and passed, and the three-year CE period begins again from that new test date.

Continuing Education Tracking Sheet

Name: John Smith, ACO for City ABC

	Course Name	Location	Date(s)	Renewal Date	CEU's	Cumulative Total
Anytime before June 30, '08 OR anytime After July 1, '08	Basic ACO Training	Amarillo	If passed basic ANYTIME before Jun 30, 2008, grandfathered in by THSC Chapter 829	A 30 hrs. due every 3yrs on 6/30 First: 6/30/2011 Then: 6/30/2014 Next: 6/30/2017		0
	Basic ACO Training	Lubbock	Mar 8-9, 2016	B 30 due by 3/9/2019		0
	Educational Training for the ACO*	Lubbock	6/16/2016		6	6
	Rabies Review*	Plainview	7/20/2016		6	12
	TACA Conference*	Corpus Christi	8/15-17/2017		11	23
	Bat Identification*	Cedar Hill	2/11/2018		6	29
	Shelter Management*	Pampa	10/26/2018		4	33
	Basic Certificate Renewed		As of 3/9/2019 ACO obtained the required 30 hrs.	B 30 due by 3/9/2022		0
	Breed Identification*	Irving	5/12/2022		6	6

* Dates shown are just examples – not actual courses that are scheduled
The original certificates (or copies) for each class must be available to verify attendance.
A suggestion: give your supervisor a copy of your certificates and keep the originals in a file at home.
Create a three-ring binder with the tracking sheet and certificate copies to keep at the shelter.
If you move to another city to work animal control, you'll have your originals as proof of training.

We continue to try and locate speakers to provide new opportunities for CE. However, presentations take time to develop and set up, so we do ask for your suggestions for topics and/or speakers. It's a big help to us as well as your fellow ACOs.



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Dallam	Sherman	Hansford	Ochiltree	Lipscomb	
Hartley	Moore	Hutchinson	Roberts	Hemphill	
Oldham	Patterson	Carson	Gray	Wheeler	
Deaf Smith	Randall	Armstrong	Danley	Collingworth	
Parmer	Castro	Swisher	Briscoe	Hall	Childress
Bailey	Lamb	Hale	Floyd	Motley	
Cochran	Hockley	Love	Crosby	Dickens	King
Vanhook	Terry	Lynn	Garza		

Amarillo Animal Management and Welfare

will host the next

Texas Department of State Health Services HSR 1

Animal Control Officer Basic Training Course

September 14 and 15, 2016

at the

Facilities Administration Building

823 S. Johnson Street

Amarillo, Texas

More information will be sent at a later date.

On September 1, 2015:

Several revisions were made to the 2014 ACO Training Manual. The revisions to the ACO Training Manual have been posted online at:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/zoonosis/education/training/aco/manual/onLine/>

Navigating to the Zoonosis Branch website

Have a hard time remembering www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/zoonosis/ every time you search for information on the Zoonosis website? Well, we do too. Domain names for various areas on our site have been around for a long time and are often provided when directing individuals to specific pages. They're quick, easy-to-remember links that get you to where you want to be faster. Dr. Laura Robinson in the Austin office was kind enough to remind us of five that we use frequently. They are not case-sensitive, but some parts are capitalized to make them easier to remember:

Zoonosis Control home page: www.TexasZoonosis.org

ZC rabies home page: www.TexasRabies.org

ZC oral rabies vaccination program home page:

www.TexasORVP.org

ZC animal control home page: www.TexasACO.org

ZC West Nile virus home page: www.TxWestNile.org

DSHS Zika Page: www.TexasZika.org