



From Doc's Desk

By James Alexander, DVM, MPVM

The past year was a difficult year for many people due to the economic downturn. This impacted numerous animal shelters in the country as people made the difficult decision to give up pets in order to survive the rough financial times. For those of you on the receiving end of the equation, thank you for being there. We can all hope the recovery does not falter and brighter times are ahead. However, only time will tell if that is the case.

As for our business, confirmed animal rabies cases were within one case (23) of the previous year's total (24) in HSR 1. Thirteen counties had confirmed rabies cases in 2009, compared to 12 in 2008. In 2008 Childress, Hansford and Ochiltree Counties tied for the most with four cases each, while Randall County set the pace in 2009 with six cases.

The following list gives our total

confirmed rabies cases for 2009 by county: Bailey (1 skunk); Childress (1 skunk); Deaf Smith (1 skunk); Donley (1 horse); Gray (1 raccoon); Hale (1 bat); Hansford (2 skunks); Hartley (1 cat, 1 dog); Hutchinson (1 skunk); Moore (3 skunks); Parmer (2 skunks); Randall (3 skunks, 2 bats, 1 horse); and Wheeler (1 calf).

Statewide, we had 1019 confirmed animal rabies cases in 2008. In 2009 we experienced a decrease of 18%, with a total of 830 confirmed animal rabies cases. The statewide species count continues to show bats as the predominant species with confirmed cases of rabies (443), followed by skunks (313), raccoons (20), cats (15), dogs (14), cattle (9), horses (7), bobcats (3), coyotes (3), foxes (2), and 1 squirrel. The squirrel is an unusual case. It is rare for one to survive the attack that might transmit rabies, but this one evidently did.



Please continue to stress the need for rabies vaccinations of pets, and, as our list shows, certain livestock species that have a high level of human contact or value. Our first confirmed case of rabies for 2010 was reported on February 16 and was a skunk in Ochiltree County; our second case was another skunk, reported on March 4, from Childress County. Because HSR 1 had eight cases in 2006 and nine cases in 2007, the jump to 24 in 2008 implied we would have an increasing trend in 2009, but we are thankful that did not occur. Stay tuned and we'll

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Finding CE/Euthanasia Courses

By Suzan Norwood, Public Health Technician

Most of you know about our web site: <http://www.texasaco.org>. That's where we list the basic ACO courses we offer, as well as courses approved by DSHS that are offered by other entities.

Did you know that some of the continuing education and euthanasia courses offered are actually being held in our area? Neither did we!

When you're looking for a course to attend, please note that the locations for courses listed on our web site as "ongoing" are for the main office of the agencies providing the training. In order to find out the actual location and dates of the courses, you will need to contact the course providers as listed on the web site. Those courses with specific dates do have specific locations listed,

fortunately.

NOTE: Be sure to check this web site *frequently*, as there are times when a course is posted very shortly before it is held. It is also recommended that you contact the providers of the "ongoing" courses frequently to check whether they have recently scheduled something in our area.

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Snow in Palo Duro Canyon

HSR 1 ZONOSIS STAFF

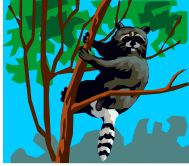
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From Doc's Desk (continued)

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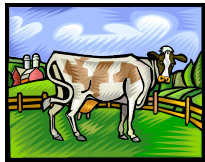
keep you updated as the year progresses.



We did have an improvement in the number of samples reported as not testable. In 2008 there were 13 samples reported as unsatisfactory, decomposed, or destroyed. In 2009 there were only four reported as unsatisfactory or decomposed.



In 2009 a veterinarian received a reprimand from the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners for providing incorrect advice to a client whose cat had tangled with a skunk. Instead of advising them to isolate the unvaccinated cat for 90 days and have it immunized according to the three-dose regimen, the veterinarian told the family to keep it quarantined for 10 days. The cat subsequently broke with rabies after the 10-day period and exposed the family to rabies, necessitating the administration of rabies prophylaxis.



The 10-day quarantine is only for dogs, cats, or domesticated ferrets that have potentially exposed someone to rabies. Since the incubation period for rabies is usually far longer than 10 days, animals potentially exposed to rabies by another animal should be euthanized, or receive an immediate booster and a 45-day isolation period for animals that are current on their series; or, for those that are not current, a series of three rabies vaccinations beginning immediately, again at three weeks, and at eight weeks, along with a 90-day isolation period. During the isolation period the animal

must be kept separate from all other animals and the only human interaction should be feeding, watering, and cleaning up wastes. If at all possible only one person should take care of those duties in order to limit the number of potential exposures if the animal develops rabies in spite of the post-exposure immunization protocols. Post-exposure prophylaxis works quite well in most cases, but occasionally an animal will receive a massive dose of virus, or it may be deposited directly into the nervous system, both of which may overwhelm the victim's immunization. Failures most often occur when an owner does not stay on schedule with the boosters in animals that were not current on the vaccinations, or delays initiating the immunization protocol.

A special case involves very young animals with immature immune systems. The rabies virus may get established in the nervous system before immunity can develop. Many times rabid skunks attempt to carry a puppy or kitten off by grabbing the scruff of the neck. This may deposit the rabies virus very close to the spinal cord, hastening its entry into the central nervous system. If there is a desire to attempt to salvage a very young pet, be aware that if the animal is so young it will not have two doses of vaccine after reaching the age for vaccination as stated in the package insert, it will need one or more additional boosters to achieve that goal. The rules for this issue may be found in 169.30(a) and (b) of the rules associated with Chapter 826 of the Texas Administrative Code.

The wording is available at: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/health/zoonosis/education/training/aco/manual/information/826rules.pdf>.

When faced with a question about rabies observation or isolation periods, please feel free to call one of us in the Zoonosis Control Program and we'll be happy to provide the information you need. The difference between the 10-day quarantine for "biters" and the 45- and 90-day isolation periods for "bitees" is an area many people find confusing and difficult to keep straight. Since that is one of our main areas of concern, we are ready with the answers if you should call.

Our West Nile virus activity last year varied from 2008. There were eight cases of the West Nile Neurologic Disease in 2009, with none in 2008. There was only one case of West Nile Fever in 2009, a decrease from four the previous year. Only one horse was confirmed as a case last year, a 50% decrease from the two cases in 2008.

On the Q-fever front, we conducted a sero-survey at 17 locations in 14 counties across the Panhandle. A total of 600 samples were collected and tested. As the data are analyzed I will be sharing interesting highlights about the prevalence of this disease in our region.

The Zoonosis Control staff members hope 2010 will turn out to be a positive year for our readers.



Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Zoonosis Control (ZC)
Animal Control Officer (ACO Basic Training Course)
Application to Attend

Enrollment based on space availability. Course date you would like to attend: _____

(Please Print Clearly)

Name (Mr., Mrs., Ms.) _____ DOB _____

Animal Control/Shelter Agency Name _____

Mailing Address (Street or PO Box) _____ City _____ Zip _____

(Please provide the address where course information/materials and test results should be sent.)

Phone Number (_____) _____ Ext. _____ County _____

Email _____ Fax _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail to:

Texas Department of State Health Services
Zoonosis Control
WTAMU Box 60968
Canyon, TX 79016-0968

OR FAX to:

(806) 655-7159

For more information call: (806) 655-7151

Cost of attending a course is \$75.00. Information on how to submit payment will be provided by the Zoonosis Control Regional Office. Do not send payment with this application.

Students will be tested over the material contained in the DSHS *Animal Control Officer Training Manual*. Students should study the entire manual thoroughly prior to attending a course.

Contact your Zoonosis Control Regional office or <http://TexasZoonosis.org> for further information on the manual and how to obtain a copy.



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TRAINING MANUAL ORDER FORM

The ***Animal Control Officer Training Manual*** is available through the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). The manual contains a basic course section, plus various state laws relating to animals. The manual is intended as a study guide for students attending a basic training course and as a reference manual for animal control agencies.

Students attending an animal control officer basic course will be tested on the material presented in the manual. Therefore, it is highly recommended that students study the manual thoroughly **before** attending a course.

Each manual **costs \$40.00**. (A 3-ring binder is not included; however, the manual is 3-hole punched and ready for insertion in a 1½-inch binder of your choice.) Make checks or money orders payable to the **Texas Department of State Health Services** and mail it with the following form to the local DSHS Zoonosis Control Regional Office covering your county:

**Texas Department of State Health Services
Zoonosis Control
WTAMU Box 60968
Canyon, TX 79016-0968
Telephone: (806) 655-7151, x. 1104**

(Complete, detach, and submit the following form with your check.)

Send Animal Control Officer Training Manual(s) to:
(Please Print or Type)

Agency or Individual	Date of Order		
Mailing Address	Delivery Address (NO Post Office Boxes)		
City	County	State	Zip Code
Contact person		() Area Code & Phone Number	
_____ Training Manual(s) X \$40.00 each = \$ _____ (Check or Money Order Enclosed)			



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 WTAMU Box 60968
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Dallam	Sherman	Hansford	Ochiltree	Lipscomb	
Hartley	Moore	Hutchinson	Roberts	Hemphill	
Oldham	Patterson	Carson	Gray	Wheeler	
Deaf Smith	Randall	Armstrong	Dawley	Collingsworth	
Parmer	Castro	Swisher	Eriscose	Hall	Childress
Bailey	Lamb	Hale	Floyd	Matley	
Cochran	Beckley	Lubbock	Crosby	Dickens	King
Yeakum	Terry	Lynn	Garza		

Sometimes, when you are angry with someone, it helps to sit down, take a moment to cool off, and think about the problem.



Works for me.



*Spring
 will finally arrive on
 March 20!!*

Animals in Public Settings

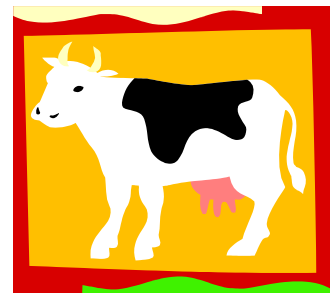
Adapted from the HSR 11 Newsletter, February 2010

It's that time of year for live-stock shows, educational ex-hibits, and other venues where the public comes into contact with animals. The National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) has published the 2009 Compendium of Measures To Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings to provide recommendations for public health officials, veterinarians, animal exhibitors, and others concerned with disease control and with minimizing risks associated with animals in public settings.

It hasn't been too many years since we experienced a situation in our region that illustrates

the need for focusing on disease control in public settings. A show calf was to be exhibited, but went off his feed, developed neurological symptoms within a couple of days, and then died. Lab results: positive for rabies. Over fifteen people had to receive post-exposure prophylaxis for contact with that one calf. If there had been public contact, the situation would have been even worse. We would have needed to ask the news media for their assistance in getting the word out to anyone who had potentially come in contact with the calf, and done a screening of those responders to find out if they were potentially exposed to the rabies virus.

The recommendations of NASPHV are available on their website at <http://www.nasphv.org>. Select "Documents," "Compendia," and then "Animal Contact Compendium."



Showing livestock can be a lot of hard work, a lot of fun — and potentially dangerous! To be safe, livestock that come in frequent contact with humans should be vaccinated against rabies.