



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Vaccinate Your Pets to Stay Safe From Rabies

PATTY RITCHIE March 25, 2015

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It's not too soon to think about vaccinating your pets against rabies.

Rabies is an incurable disease that is nearly always fatal. It's spread through contact with an infected mammal, such as a racoon, bat, fox or skunk. It's also been known to infect cattle and other livestock. That's why it's especially important to make sure your pets are properly vaccinated to help keep rabies out of your family's home.

Unfortunately, cases of wildlife rabies have been on the rise. From 2010 through 2013, there were 109 confirmed cases of wildlife rabies in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties, according to the state Health Department's Wadsworth laboratories. That's nearly 7 percent of the total number of wildlife rabies cases discovered statewide!

And while no humans were known to contract the disease from wildlife in this state, in 2012, a Fort Drum soldier died from rabies he contracted from a dog bite overseas.

Since joining the State Senate, I've taken a leading role in pressing for rabies education and prevention. I fought to restore cuts to rabies funding, and delivered more than \$1 million for rabies prevention, and once again this year, I'm working to restore a 90 percent cut in state rabies funding in the budget that's due April 1.

In addition, for the past two years, I've hosted over a dozen rabies clinic to provide free or low-cost vaccines to thousands of pets in our region.

For information on free and low-cost clinics for 2015, click on the following links.

[Jefferson County Spring 2015 Rabies Clinics](#)

[Oswego County Rabies Clinics 2015](#)

[St. Lawrence County Rabies Clinics 2015](#)