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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department, Animal Control to Host Free Drive-Through Rabies Clinic

GASTONIA — Staff from the Gaston County Health Department and Gaston County Animal Control are offering free one-year rabies vaccines to the first 100 pets in line Saturday morning, Sept. 8.

The agencies are hosting a free drive-through rabies immunization clinic in observance of World Rabies Day September 8. North Carolina law requires that all dogs or cats, 4 months of age or older, be vaccinated against rabies.

The Health Department will provide 100 one-year vaccines for dogs or cats free of charge from 9-11 a.m. or until the vaccine runs out. The event will be held in the main parking lot of the Health Department, 991 W. Hudson Blvd. Veterinarians Kristine Blankenship, DVM and Marty Hughes, DVM, with the veterinary tech program at Gaston College, will be on-hand to administer the vaccine.

As an added convenience, Animal Control personnel will be on-site to complete the necessary paperwork to receive a license tag for pets who are vaccinated that day. License tags cost \$15, payable by cash or check. License tags do not have to be purchased that day, but must be purchased from Animal Control within three business days. Mail-in forms will be available for those who wish to pay later.

“In the grand scheme of things, with how busy life is these days, it’s easy to forget or put off getting that vaccine for your pet,” said Animal Control Director Reggie Horton. “But what all pet owners must realize is that rabies is always present in our local wildlife population. An animal attack can happen in a split second, when you least expect it. And the reality is that if your pet isn’t vaccinated, you’re likely going to lose that member of your family. A vaccine can prevent all of that.”

North Carolina law requires that any unvaccinated pet that is bitten by an animal with an unknown rabies status be quarantined for six months at the owner’s expense, or put down.

(more)

Saturday's event kicks off Gaston County's annual rabies clinic, a two-week period during which vets around the county are offering rabies vaccines at a reduced rate of \$5 per vaccine. Call your vet's office to find out if they are participating and how to take advantage of this offer. These prices are valid Sept. 8-22 at participating vets; other veterinary office fees may apply.

For more information on World Rabies Day, go to www.worldrabiesday.org. For a list of local vets participating in the reduced-price rabies clinics for the next two weeks, go to www.gastonpublichealth.org.

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