

World Rabies Day Poster Competition



Kansas 2025



What is Rabies?

Rabies is a deadly neurologic disease caused by infection with the rabies virus. People and animals become infected with rabies after they are bitten or scratched by an animal with rabies. Globally, the most important animal responsible for transmitting rabies to humans are dogs. It is estimated that 59,000 people die each year from rabies, and that 99% of these are due to dog bites. In the United States, we see a different picture, where an average of 0-3 people die each year from rabies, primarily from contact with rabid bats.



Act Now: You, Me Community

This year's theme for World Rabies Day emphasizes that rabies prevention and elimination is a community effort that requires all of us to work together to eliminate rabies deaths. This includes taking action in your personal life by learning about rabies, vaccinating your pet to protect against rabies, and advocating for better rabies prevention policies. It also means that communities must come together to support rabies prevention efforts, like vaccination campaigns, animal bite prevention and education, promoting safe interactions with wildlife, and sharing the information we learn.

Rabies in Kansas

Each year, the Kansas Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory tests between 900 and 1,000 animal specimens from Kansas for rabies. These are usually animals that have bitten a person or a pet. It's important that we test wild animals that bite people so that people know if they were exposed to rabies or not.

For instance, if a person wakes up to a bat in their room, that bat needs to be tested for rabies so that person knows if they need to be treated for an exposure to rabies.

The striped skunk is the terrestrial wildlife reservoir of rabies in Kansas, which means that rabies circulates in this species, and rabid skunks are the main risk of exposure to people, pets, and livestock in Kansas. Bats that can carry rabies are found throughout the US, so rabies in bats is a factor in Kansas as well.



How Can I Prevent Rabies?

Vaccinate

1

There are several simple steps people can take to protect themselves and our furry friends from rabies. First, all cats, dogs, ferrets, horses, and valuable livestock like cattle and sheep should be vaccinated for rabies. For some species, like horses, this is an annual vaccine. For others, like cats and dogs, vaccines may be every 1, 2 or 3 years depending on the vaccine product used.

Vaccinating domestic animals against rabies creates a barrier between wildlife with rabies and humans. It also helps protect other animals and humans who may be bitten by a vaccinated dog or cat.

Watch, but Don't Touch

2

Another important step in preventing rabies is to never touch, play with, or capture a wild animal. Sadly, many wild animals are euthanized each year in Kansas because a person has picked them up and was bitten. If you see a wild animal, enjoy them from a distance. Never attempt to keep a wild animal as a pet.

Report

3

The final piece to rabies prevention is to report all animal bites, both domestic and wild, to your healthcare provider or local health department. They will be able to evaluate you for your risk for rabies and other infections that can be transmitted through animal bites.

With timely and appropriate post-exposure prophylaxis, rabies is a nearly 100% preventable disease!

Resources

Looking for more information on rabies and One Health both globally and in the United States? Check out these amazing resources to explore different rabies topics!

- [Kansas Department of Health and Environment](#)
- [Kansas Environmental Public Health Tracking Program](#)
 - [Kansas Rabies Surveillance](#)
- [Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks](#)
- [Kansas Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory: Rabies](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - [Rabies Home Page](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)
- [One Health Commission](#)
- [One Health Commission - Bat Rabies Education Team](#)
- [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#)
- Global Alliance for Rabies Control
 - [Rabies FAQs](#)
 - [Rabies educational resources](#)
- [Bavarian Nordic - Disease Information on Rabies](#)

Questions about Poster Submissions

We need your help to raise awareness about rabies prevention in Kansas! The goal of our poster contest is to help get the word out about rabies and the ways that wildlife can transmit this disease to humans and pets. Your posters can also share the ways that rabies can be prevented. We can't wait to see what you create!

What needs to be included in the poster submission?

Poster submissions must be accompanied with the student's name, age, and grade. The school's name, address, teacher's name and contact information must be included as well.

Digital submissions are encouraged.

When is the poster due?

Entries for the poster competition must be received by January 30, 2026.

How do you turn in the poster?

Digital art posters and all other information must be uploaded, in PDF format, by a school staff member, [to this link](#).

Non-digital art posters and all other information should be mailed to:

Kansas State University Rabies Laboratory
2005 Research Park Circle
Manhattan, KS 66502

Label these "Poster Competition.
Attention Dr. Janine Seetahal."

How big does the poster need to be?

Posters must be 8.5 x 11 inches only. Vertical (portrait) orientation is required. Regular paper or card stock must be used.

How will posters be graded?

Posters will be graded on creativity, originality, and visual appeal. Winners will be announced on World Wildlife Day, March 3, 2026.

Winning posters will be featured on the website of the Kansas Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (KVDL) Rabies Laboratory. They will be also be showcased in future rabies events hosted by KVDL, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the One Health Commission.

What are the prizes for winning?

Please see the "Letter to Schools" for the prize list and additional information.