



To: Emergency Medical Alert Network (EMAN) Participants
Date: November 2, 2006

Rabies Consultations Relating to Bats at an Outdoor School

Parents of approximately 450 students from 15 schools will receive a letter this evening, requesting they ask their children about exposure to bats while staying Cuyamaca Outdoor School. Specifically, parents of students that spent the night in the West Wind cabin (1 of 2 cabins for girls) at the school will receive this letter. The letter states:

“If your child slept in the West Wind cabin, please follow the[se]...guidelines below:

1. Ask your child if they saw a bat in the cabin....
2. If so, did they touch or were they bitten by a bat
3. When they fell asleep or when they woke up was there a bat near them or their sleeping bag?”

Parents have been instructed to immediately contact their physician if the child answers “yes” to #2 or #3 regarding the potential need for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). If, as a health care provider, you are contacted by a parent and need consultation about whether rabies PEP is indicated, please contact the Community Epidemiology Branch.

Approximately 10% of bats tested annually at the San Diego County Public Health Laboratory are positive for rabies. While this is an overestimate of the actual prevalence of bat rabies in San Diego County, bats remain the mostly likely animal in the County to test positive for rabies.

Bats have only been observed in the West Wind cabin at the school. Bats have not been observed in the other 3 cabins at the school (North, South, or East cabins), nor has there been any evidence of recent bat activity in cabins other than West Wind. The school has instituted a policy, effective immediately, that bats will be removed from any enclosed space where students sleep. A letter will be sent to other outdoor schools and camps suggesting the same policy be instituted.

For more information about rabies, bats and summer camps, please visit the following CDC website:
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies/ques&ans/q&a_summer_camp.htm.

Thank you for your continued participation.

Emergency Medical Alert Network (EMAN)
County of San Diego, Health & Human Services Agency
Community Epidemiology Branch