



# News Release

**GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **WESTCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFIRMS BEAR THAT ATTACKED CHILD TESTED NEGATIVE FOR RABIES**

(White Plains, NY) – The Westchester County Department of Health has confirmed today that the bear that attacked a 7-year old boy in Bedford as he played in his backyard on Tuesday has tested negative for rabies. The child is being treated and the bear was shot by authorities shortly after the attack.

Residents should never approach or have contact with a stray or wild animal. Residents who see a stray or wild animal acting strangely should alert local authorities to avoid possible exposure to rabies. Residents can also help by keeping their trashcan lids securely sealed, removing wild bird feeders, and avoid leaving pet food outdoors.

Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD, said: “If you see an animal that is acting aggressively, stay away from it and contact local police immediately.”

Unusual behavior may be the first sign of rabies in an animal. A rabid animal may become either abnormally aggressive or unusually tame. It may lose fear of people and become excited and irritable, or, conversely appear particularly passive and lethargic. Staggering and frothing at the mouth are sometimes noted.

Any physical contact with a wild or unfamiliar animal should be reported to a health care provider. All animal bites or contacts with animals suspected of having rabies must be reported to the Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000, 24 hours a day.

Keeping pet rabies vaccinations up to date is also important for protection against rabies. New York State law requires dogs, cats and ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies and receive regular booster shots. For more information, go to [www.westchestergov.com/health](http://www.westchestergov.com/health) or call the RABIES INFOLINE at (914) 813-5010.

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