

ALLEN BEALS, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner of Health



MARYELLEN ODELL
County Executive

ROBERT MORRIS, P.E.
Director of Environmental Health

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
1 Geneva Road, Brewster, New York 10509
Phone# (845)-808-1390

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Barbara Iardi, Public Information Officer, 845-808-1390

Bat Capture May Help Avoid Treatment;
PCDOH Reports Recent Uptick in Preventative Treatments

Brewster, NY- A seasonal uptick in the number of bats found in Putnam County homes has caused increased rabies treatments because the bats were not captured.

“The important thing to remember is capture any bat found in your home, and then call the Health Department to find out about testing,” says Allen Beals, MD, Commissioner of Health. “Less than 2% of bats have rabies so with testing the need for treatment should be markedly reduced. On the other hand, when there is no bat for testing, and exposure may have occurred, treatment is necessary,” he warns. “Remember, rabies remains the most deadly virus. It is 100% fatal if untreated. Fortunately, post-exposure treatment is also 100% effective in preventing the disease. That’s why all possible exposures, absent the bat for testing, must be treated as a necessary safety precaution,” Dr. Beals continues. All possible bat exposures should be reported immediately by calling 808-1390. (Follow voice mail instructions for evening and weekend calls.)

An instructional video on “Capturing a Bat,” is available on the Putnam County Department of Health’s website at <http://www.putnamcountyny.gov/health> and via their social media sites, Facebook and Twitter, and on the New York State Department of Health’s website as well

The Health Department’s mission is to improve and protect the health of the county’s nearly 100,000 residents through prevention of illness and injury. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.putnamcountyny.gov/health>; or visit our social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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