

Cases of Rabies in Homer and Anchorage Bring Urgent Warning

Dr. Ralph Williams, Chief of Branch of Laboratories, Alaska Department of Health and Welfare, announced this week that there has been a case of rabies in Homer where one person has been bitten by a stray dog, confirmed as being rabid by lab examination.

Others have been exposed to this dog and are also under medical evaluation.

There has also been a case of rabies reported in an Anchorage feline.

Since rabies may occur in most of Alaska, all Alaskans are warned to exercise caution around animals, especially those acting in an unusual manner. Stray animals should be avoided at all times.

The best rabies control is

prevention. The Alaska Department of Agriculture maintains a stock of vaccines which are available at cost (approximately 50 cents per dog) in areas where dogs are economically important and veterinary service is not available.

It is required that some qualified individual be in charge, for handling vaccines requires certain precautions.

In communities where rabies is a threat, and individuals are unable to afford the protection for their dogs, the Department of Agriculture will be able to assist.

For humans requiring rabies vaccine, the Division of Public Health will assist.

SUGGESTED RABIES CONTROL PROGRAM FOR ISO-

LATED COMMUNITIES AND CAMPS

1. Confine all dogs and eliminate strays.

2. Vaccinate all animals. Immunity lasts up to three years.

3. Eliminate foxes and wolves in the area where rabies has been found.

4. Confine for observation all biting animals or those showing any rabies symptoms.

5. Use caution in handling suspect animals or in removing the heads for examination, to prevent accidental exposure.

6. Submit heads of those animals which show definite symptoms.

7. Seek medical aid immediately when bitten by suspect animals.