**PRESS RELEASE**

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Lewis County Public Health has been notified by the New York State Department of Health Wadsworth Laboratory that a skunk in the Town of Watson has tested positive for rabies. The skunk had been observed exhibiting unusual behavior but had no contact with humans or domestic animals.

Lewis County Public Health reminds all Lewis County residents and those that visit our county that rabies is a very serious and deadly disease affecting the central nervous system. It can be transmitted from infected animals to humans if they are exposed to the saliva or nervous tissue of a rabid animal through a bite or scratch. It is also possible for a person to have contact with a bat and not know it while asleep, therefore all bats that are found in the room of a sleeping person or small child should be captured and tested for rabies. To view a video on how to safely capture a bat, please visit: <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/zoonoses/rabies/docs/catch_the_bat_high.wmv>

It is very important for people and their pets to avoid direct contact with wild animals, particularly if the animals are behaving abnormally, and ensure your pets are up to date with rabies vaccinations. For more information about rabies, call Lewis County Public Health at 315-376-5453. For information on upcoming rabies vaccination clinics, check the Lewis County Public Health App for details by scanning the QR Code:

