WHAT TO DO ABOUT BATS

Austin/Travis County Animal Services **does not** provide a bat removal service for buildings in which bat colonies are roosting (this is a pest control function). Animal Control will respond in cases of possible rabies exposure as a result of human/bat or domestic pet/bat contact. In these circumstances, Animal Control will respond to the scene and impound the individual bat(s) involved for testing purposes.

WHAT IS "POSSIBLE RABIES EXPOSURE?"

According to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, rabies exposure occurs only when a person is bitten or scratched by a potentially rabid animal, or when abrasions, open wounds, or mucous membranes are contaminated with the saliva, brain, or nervous system tissue of a potentially rabid animal. Merely touching such an animal, or contact with its urine or feces does **not** constitute exposure.

A BAT IN A BUILDING

- Bats do not want to be in areas where people live and work, but any bats found in such places should be captured and tested due to the potential for unrecognized/unreported exposure.
- If there is **any** chance that the bat may have made physical contact with people or pets (i.e. found in a room where someone was sleeping, or where young children, pets, or non-verbal adults were present and unsupervised – even momentarily), contain the bat if possible and call Animal Control at 3-1-1 so the bat can be tested.
- To contain a resting bat, put on thick leather gloves and carefully place a wide-mouthed cup, jar, or coffee can over the resting bat. Then slip a piece of cardboard between the bat and the resting surface to dislodge it into the container, and affix the lid, taping it on if necessary.
- NEVER HANDLE A BAT—ALIVE OR DEAD—WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!

SICK, INJURED BATS AND DEAD BATS

- There is no danger of rabies from a dead bat if it is not handled.
- If the bat is in an isolated area where contact with people or pets is unlikely, you can simply pick it up carefully with a thick piece of newspaper, or scoop it up in a coffee can or other container, put it in a bag, and place it in the trash.
- **KEEP PEOPLE AND PETS AWAY FROM THE BAT, CALL ANIMAL CONTROL AT 3-1-1.**

August 21, 2014

IF SOMEONE IS BITTEN BY A BAT

- **CALL ANIMAL CONTROL IMMEDIATELY AT 3-1-1 TO REPORT THE INCIDENT, AND ADMINISTER FIRST AID TO THE VICTIM.**
- If possible to do so safely, contain or try to keep track of the bat until Animal Control arrives to capture it for testing.
- Animal Control will need the name, address, and phone number of the victim and any witnesses, and the address where the incident occurred.
- The victim should contact his or her personal physician as soon as possible, and inform the Disease Surveillance Unit of the physician's response.
- The victim's personal physician will determine whether or not to initiate rabies post-exposure treatment immediately, or wait for the result of the rabies test.

IF YOUR PET CATCHES OR KILLS A BAT

- Contain the bat and call Animal Control at 3-1-1 for further instructions.
- Take your pet to the vet **immediately** for a rabies vaccination – even if the previous vaccination is not yet expired.
- Confine the pet, preventing contact with persons or animals outside the family until test results are received.

IF BATS HAVE TAKEN UP RESIDENCE

If bats are roosting in an attic or similar area, a one-way exit can be constructed which allows them to leave in search of food, but will prevent their re-entry. Many pest control professionals can help you with this problem, and Bat Conservation International can provide you with information on how to evict bats yourself. **Do not use one-way exits during June and July or flightless young may be trapped inside!**

For more information, contact:

Austin/Travis Co. Animal Control   **3-1-1**
Bat Conservation Int'l www.batcon.org   **512-327-9721**
Austin Animal Center   **3-1-1**
HHSD Disease Surveillance Unit   **512-972-5555**

Courtesy of Austin/Travis County Animal Services

August 22, 2014