

20-19-406. Vaccination.

(a) Wolves and wolf-dog hybrids are required to be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian against rabies with a vaccine approved for dog use, and a rabies certificate may be issued.

(b) Veterinarians must inform the owner of the wolf or wolf-dog hybrid, preferably in writing, that the vaccination is considered "off label" and that protection against rabies is not guaranteed.

(c) If a wolf or wolf-dog hybrid bites a person, the following criteria will be used by an official of the Department of Health in dealing with the animal:

(1) The decision shall consider, at least:

(A) The epidemiology and risk of rabies in the species of animal in question;

(B) Possible prior exposure to a rabies vector;

(C) Behavior of the animal at the time of the bite;

(D) Prior rabies vaccinations; and

(E) Other circumstances that may exist;

(2) In some situations, the department will consider the initiative and willingness of the individual so exposed to submit to postexposure antirabies immunization after being adequately informed of all potential risks;

(3) Upon written order by the Director of the Department of Health or a specifically designated representative, any biting animal determined to be at significant risk for the transmission of rabies shall be humanely killed and the brain tissue submitted for testing; and

(4) The department has the authority to order the quarantine of an animal determined to be a very low risk for the transmission of rabies for a thirty-day observation period as an alternate method to euthanasia and testing.

(d) Owners must be notified and given three (3) business days to provide proof to the department in their animal's defense before the animal can be euthanized.

(e) If, in the future, the United States Department of Agriculture approves the use of rabies vaccines in wolves or wolf-dog hybrids, or both, then wolves and wolf-dog hybrids will fall under the same regulations as dogs regarding biting humans and rabies control.

History. Acts 2001, No. 1768, § 6.