The Effect of Veterinary Vaccines on Lake County and Ohio’s Public Health

Walker, Heather

Hundreds of people are potentially exposed to rabies via animals each year in Lake County alone. These potential rabies exposures must be reported to the Lake County General Health Department to ensure none of the exposures received rabies from a rabid wild animal. Although most domestic animals are vaccinated for rabies, some are not. If any of the domestic animals, that are not immunized, received rabies from the surrounding wildlife, rabies could spread to other animal or human within Lake County at a horrifyingly fast rate. The federal, state, and local departments of health participate in many rabies prevention methods including oral rabies vaccines, vaccine barriers, and rabies surveillance in order to decrease the risk of exposure to a wild strain of this disease. The method being focused on here is rabies surveillance, an indirect way of supervising the spread of rabies by surveying potential rabies exposures. From the data gathered, it has been observed that 50 percent of animals have not been vaccinated prior to an animal attack. It has also been noted that the confirmed cases of rabid animals within Ohio are increasing over the past 5 years. This paper analyzes the effectiveness of rabies surveillance and whether or not this method is helping combat against rabies being transmitted into the domestic animal and human populations of Lake County.

Awards Won: