



MDH Use Only

# Rabies Specimen Submission Form

Physicians and veterinarians may obtain information on rabies 24/7 from the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-5414. Public calls are taken at the same number M-F, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Submitter

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
Name of submitter: \_\_\_\_\_  
(check all that apply):  Owner  Veterinarian  Exposed person  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clinic/Org. name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

VDL Use Only

Test Animal

Species: \_\_\_\_\_  Owned  Stray  Wild Animal name or ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of death: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Tested animal was:  Euthanized  Killed  Found dead  
Owner (if different from submitter): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address/Location of test animal: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Explain situation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cremation:**  Mass (no remains returned)  
 Individual (remains returned) Arranged by owner or veterinary clinic. An animal testing positive for rabies cannot be released. If the sample is untestable, remains may be released on a case by case basis.

Exposure

No human exposure  Human exposure Date of exposure: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
Type of exposure:  Bite (where on body): \_\_\_\_\_  Non-bite  
Person(s) exposed: \_\_\_\_\_ Age(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Where did exposure occur? \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone 1 of exposed person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Laboratory Only

Live  Dead:  Whole body Condition:  Good  
 Head  Fair  
 Brain:  Hippocampus  Insufficient  Autolyzed  
 Cerebellum  Insufficient  Traumatized  
 Brain stem  Insufficient  Dried  
 No tissue  
Date sent to MDH: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Species of animal to be tested:**

Companion animals should be euthanized by a veterinarian. Live bats will be accepted during normal business hours only; they should be hand delivered and labeled "Live Bat for Rabies Testing." Small rodents (hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, squirrels, chipmunks, rats, mice, gophers, etc.), insectivores (moles and shrews), and lagomorphs (hares and rabbits) do not pose a risk for rabies in Minnesota, and should not be submitted for testing. For guidance on unusual situations involving bites from these animals, please call 651-201-5414. Reptiles, amphibians and birds are not susceptible to rabies and will not be tested for it.

**Specimen preparation:**

**Complete, bilateral samples of brain stem, hippocampus and cerebellum are required for rabies testing.** If possible, submit the head of large animals and the entire body of small animals. When submitting only the brain, submit the entire brain. Submit fresh, chilled tissues only; do not fix the brain in chemical preservatives. Refrigerate, do not freeze specimens for rabies testing prior to shipping. However, if specimens have been inadvertently frozen, they may yield satisfactory results; do not thaw them prior to shipping.

**Packing requirements:**

- Chill specimen prior to packing for hand delivery or shipping by overnight carrier. Specimens that have been packed for delivery while still warm may arrive in unsatisfactory condition for rabies testing due to autolysis.
- Double bag and securely seal specimen in heavy, leak-proof plastic bags. Place in a leak-proof container, preferably a Styrofoam box with a cardboard exterior.
- Include leak-proof freezer packs in sufficient number to keep the specimen cold during transit. During the summer months particularly, many samples arrive at the VDL warm and in unsatisfactory condition for rabies testing.
- Fill any remaining space within the container with newspaper or other absorbent packing material to absorb fluids in case of leakage.
- Complete this form, place in a plastic bag and attach to the outside of the specimen container.
- Label the exterior of the box, "Veterinary Diagnostic Specimen."

**Delivery instructions:**

**Whenever possible, specimens should be hand delivered.** If hand delivery is not possible, ship by an overnight delivery service (such as FedEx). For next day results, specimens must be received at the VDL by 11:00 am. Specimens should never be sent by mail – even Priority mail. There is a fee of \$26.25 for testing with an additional 10% charge for out-of-state submission. Charges associated with euthanasia, specimen preparation, packaging, shipping and testing are the responsibility of the person requesting the rabies testing. Questions about specimen submission should be directed to the VDL.

**Specimens should be delivered to:****Business hours (M-F, 8:00-4:30)**

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL)  
University of Minnesota-St. Paul Campus  
1333 Gortner Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
Phone: 612-625-8787

OR

**Non-business hours and holidays\***

Veterinary Medical Center  
University of Minnesota-St. Paul Campus  
1365 Gortner Avenue (adjoining VDL)  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
Phone: 612-625-9711

\*Live bats are not accepted after business hours

**Cremation services:**

Animal remains will be processed using mass chemical cremation unless arrangements for individual cremation are made by the client or the client's veterinarian. Please indicate individual or mass cremation on the rabies specimen submission form by checking the box. Once the test result is known, an animal testing negative for rabies may be released to a private cremation service. An animal that tests positive for rabies will not be released for cremation due to the risk of human exposure. If an animal is untestable for any reason, remains may be released on a case by case basis.