



# BATS !



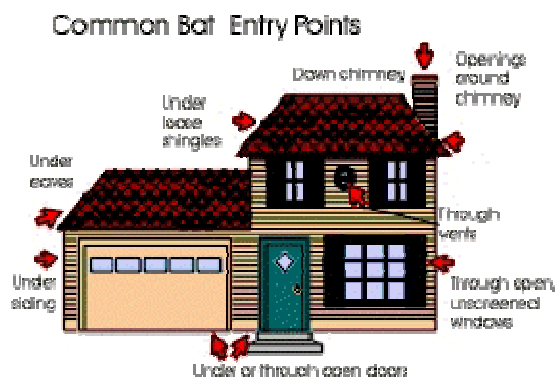
## Management of Bat-Related Incidents in Homes

In New York State, it is not uncommon for bats to appear in occupied dwellings, such as homes, apartments or camps. Evaluating potential human and domestic animal contact with a bat and capturing and retaining it for rabies testing, if necessary, is critical for the effective management of rabies exposures.

Almost all of the human rabies deaths that have occurred in the United States since 1990 were linked to bat rabies. Of the bat-associated fatalities, the majority of people did not report any known contact with a bat. Among bats submitted to the NYS Department of Health Wadsworth Center Rabies Laboratory for testing, **approximately 97% are not rabid**; therefore, most of the time rabies post-exposure treatment can be avoided when the bat is available for testing.

## To keep bats out of a home or other buildings:

- **You can “batproof” your home by** closing or covering openings as thin as a pencil which allow entry to the roost. You should use sheet metal, wood, various caulking compounds, or other construction materials impervious to bats.
- **The best time to batproof is** late fall, to avoid trapping baby bats in the roost. The best time is at night when bats are feeding away from the roost. To find the openings, watch the bats leave or enter at dusk or before dawn.



## To capture the bat:

- Close the windows, and the room and closet doors; turn on the lights if the room is dark
- Wait for the bat to land
- Wearing gloves (heavy, preferably pliable thick leather), cover the bat with a coffee can or similar container with a lid
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the can, trapping the bat
- With one hand firmly holding the cardboard in place against the top of the can, turn the can right side up
- Replace the cardboard with the lid (if no lid, tape the cardboard tightly to the can)
- **Immediately contact your local health department to arrange for rabies examination of the bat.**

## All bat-related incidents should be reported to the local health department.

For questions about handling incidents, or to immediately report those which may require rabies treatment, the local health department should be contacted. They have someone available 24 hours per day.

The name of the local health department is:

**Cortland County Health**

Their business hours phone number is:  
**753-5035**

Their after hours phone number is:  
**753-3311**

This is the 911 Center. Ask to have the Environmental Health Department called.

## Recommended Items for a Bat Capture Kit

- Gloves (heavy, preferably pliable thick leather)
- Forceps (9" to 12" length, rat-tooth for gripping)
- Extension pole w/net (fine mesh insect net of polyester or muslin material with a spring steel hoop on telescoping pole -- net and pole sold separately)
- Coffee can w/tight-fitting lid or similar container (e.g., cardboard ice cream carton w/lid; keep multiple containers on hand)
- Sheet of cardboard to slide between wall and container to act as a lid
- Tape (to secure lid on container)
- Flashlights (including fresh batteries & extra batteries)
- General Guidelines for Management of Bat-Related Incidents

## Instructions for use of bat capture kit:

In this home, the bat capture kit is kept: \_\_\_\_\_  
(location)

### **If a bat is within arm's reach, the coffee can method should be used:**

*Carefully avoid direct contact with the bat and avoid damaging its head.*

### **To capture the bat:**

- Close the windows, and the room and closet doors; turn on the lights if the room is dark
- Wait for the bat to land
- Wearing gloves (heavy, preferably pliable thick leather), cover the bat with a coffee can or similar container with a lid\*
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the can, trapping the bat
- With one hand firmly holding the cardboard in place against the top of the can, turn the can right side up
- Replace the cardboard with the lid (if no lid, tape the cardboard tightly to the can)
- **Immediately contact your local health department to arrange for rabies examination of the bat.**

### **If a bat is not within arm's reach, an extension pole with a net may be used to capture the bat:**

- While wearing gloves (heavy, preferably pliable thick leather), slowly approach the bat with net
- Rotate the pole so that the bat is scooped into the net and the net turns in on itself containing the bat
- With a gloved hand, grab the bat through the outside of the net, slide the coffee can into the net, push the bat into the can and place the lid on the can (if no lid, tape a piece of cardboard over the can)
- **Immediately contact your local health department to arrange for rabies examination of the bat.**

\* Note: If a bat has landed behind something or in a space that is too narrow to cover with a coffee can, forceps may be used to capture it. Using a gloved hand to hold the forceps, firmly but gently grasp the bat under a wing and close to its body. Place the bat in the bottom of the coffee can and release your grip on the forceps. Cover the coffee can and contact the local health department as stated above.

*In the event that four or more hours are needed before transportation of a bat for subsequent rabies testing occurs, the bat should be double-bagged in plastic and placed in a cooler or refrigerated area.*