



PUBLIC SAFETY DIVISION ANNOUNCEMENT

Suggested Media

Instructions:

Please run at your discretion.

Media Inquiries:

MCKmedia@mck.ca

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke

Kahnawà:ke Mohawk
Territory
P.O. Box 720
J0L 1B0

Tel: (450) 632-7500

Fax: (450) 638-5958

*As per the MCK
Communications Protocol,
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arranged through the Public
Relations / Communications
Unit*

Distemper showing up in wildlife around the community

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 9, Kentenhkó:wa/November 2023) The Public Safety Division's Animal Control Services wishes to inform the community of a critical animal health situation. Distemper has been showing up in wildlife around the community.

Distemper is a viral infection that can infect dogs, raccoons, skunks, and foxes. The virus is not harmful and cannot be transmitted to cats or humans. Dogs can become infected with the Distemper virus from direct contact with a sick animal or from being near an infected animal when it is coughing or sneezing. The virus can also be transmitted through shared food, water bowls, or other objects that an infected animal contaminated. Puppies and unvaccinated dogs are at higher risk for infection with Distemper.

Common clinical signs of Distemper in dogs include discharge from the eyes and/or nose, fever, coughing, lethargy, disorientation, tremors, and seizures. The clinical signs are similar in raccoons and other wildlife. Distemper has no treatment, so preventing the disease in dogs is crucial.

- **Vaccinate dogs for Distemper:** Puppies should receive a series of three (3) or more Distemper vaccines between the ages of two (2) and four (4) months. The vaccine should be boosted a year later, then every three (3) years for life.
- **Protect puppies:** Keep puppies at home and away from unfamiliar dogs until they have completed the vaccination series. Use caution when socializing dogs or in areas where dogs congregate, such as dog parks, doggy daycare, and boarding facilities.
- **Keep dogs away from wildlife:** Never allow dogs to come in contact with wildlife.
- **Keep pet food and water indoors, away from wildlife:** Pet food and water left outdoors attract wildlife, which can spread Distemper to dogs.

Please call Animal Control at **450-632-0635** or **514-232-3307** if you suspect an animal has Distemper or for any other information.