

**PRESS RELEASE FROM LEGISLATOR
STEVE STERN**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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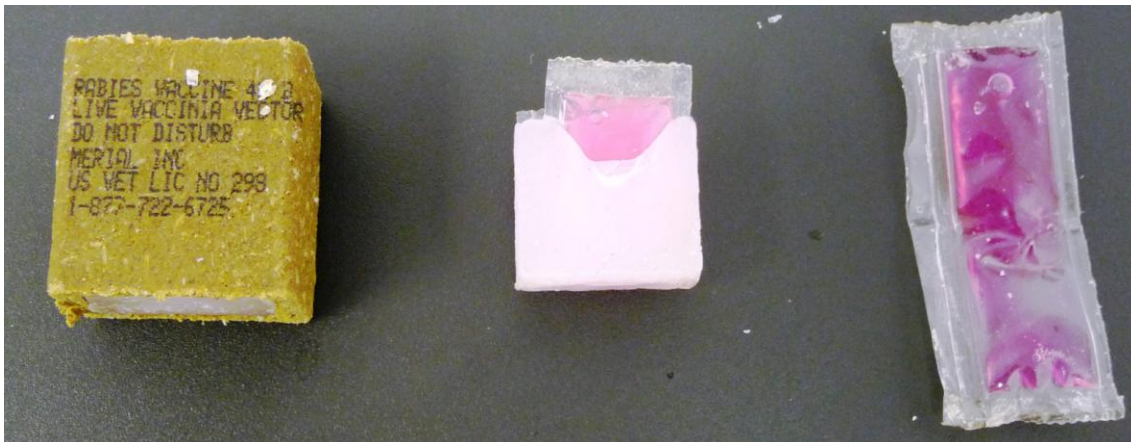
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Legislator Steve Stern Advises Community Of Rabies Baiting Program

Vaccine to be distributed in September



HUNTINGTON, NY –Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern (D-Huntington) 16th LD is advising that the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, along with the New York State Department of Health, NY State Police Aviation Unit and the US Department of Agriculture’s Department of Wildlife Services, will begin distributing one inch square fish-meal bait containing Oral Rabies Vaccine from County vehicles and a helicopter in the western half of Suffolk County. The goal is to contain the spread of raccoon terrestrial rabies by immunizing raccoons before they become infected. Vaccine drops by helicopter, in wooded areas, will begin on Thursday, September 9, 2010. Approximately 115,000 baits will be dropped, weather permitting, over a three-four day period. An additional 50,000 baits will be distributed by county vehicles in residential areas between September 9, 2010 and September 17, 2010. Contact with the vaccines poses no health threat to humans or domestic animals; however the New York State and Suffolk County Departments of Health recommend the following precautions be taken:

- Supervise children outdoors both during and for one week after bait distribution.
- Keep dogs and cats indoors or on leashes both during and for one week after bait distribution.
- Baits are not harmful to dogs and cats, but can cause them to vomit if they ingest large numbers of baits. If there is direct contact with bait, call the poison control center at (516) 542-2323.
- Call Poison Control if a child ingests bait.

- Wash hands after contact with the bait.
- It is NOT possible to get rabies from the bait.
- New York and Suffolk County law requires that all dogs, cats and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies.
- Advise children to tell an adult IMMEDIATELY if they have been bitten or scratched by an animal.

The County Health Department is also urging residents to make sure that dogs and cats are up to date on rabies vaccinations and are kept under close supervision to avoid contact with rabid raccoons.

For more information on rabies, visit the New York State Department of Health website at www.health.state.ny.us or call the Suffolk County Department of Health Rabies Hotline at (631) 787-2200 weekdays from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.