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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coyote found in East Providence tests positive for Rabies

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – On Friday, Sept. 11 a city of East Providence employee saw a coyote on the property of the WHJY building/Eastern Avenue area acting strangely. Animal Control was dispatched to the area.

East Providence Animal Control Officer William Muggle located and apprehended the coyote.

The coyote was tested and a sample sent to the Rhode Island Department of Health for testing. The coyote tested positive for the rabies virus.

“We ask that people use heightened caution, especially in that area,” Muggle said. “Be sure not to leave pets or children outside unattended. Coyotes are crepuscular, which means they are most active around dusk and dawn, but are often seen outside during the daytime hours as well.”

Rabies in coyotes is considered extremely rare and there have only been three confirmed cases of coyotes with rabies (including this case) in Rhode Island since 1994, according to Muggle.

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and the Rhode Island State Veterinarian's Office were also made aware of the confirmed case.

In recent weeks, several coyote sightings have been reported to Animal Control. Some residents reported that coyotes, in the Algonquin Road area, were acting strangely. Those sightings were in close proximity to the area of the rabid coyote captured by Officer Muggle.

If you see a coyote out during the day wandering aimlessly through a neighborhood, getting close without seeming fearful, stumbling or walking strangely, or acting aggressively, please contact the East Providence Police at 401-435-7600 or RIDEM 401-222-3070.



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