



MIDDLE-BROOK REGIONAL HEALTH COMMISSION

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PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES

BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK
TOWNSHIP OF GREEN BROOK
BOROUGH OF SOUTH BOUND BROOK
BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG
TOWNSHIP OF WARREN

NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE SUBMISSIONS

RABIES CLINIC

The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission, with the Warren Township Board of Health, will be offering one rabies clinic this spring. All residents are encouraged to have their dog or cat vaccinated against rabies. Spring is upon us and we can expect to see more of our local wildlife. Just like we do, our furry friends become more active when the weather improves. Along with this activity comes the increased risk of exposure to rabies. If your pet has been previously vaccinated the health department recommends that your dog or cat be vaccinated every other year. If your pet has not been vaccinated against rabies now is the time. **The clinic is free to all.**

DATE: Saturday, May 4, 2013
TIME: 9:00 am to 10:00 am
WHERE: Washington Valley Fire House
Washington Valley Road
Warren, NJ

Residents should also be aware that the Health Department also offers several rabies clinics in the fall of each year. Please call 732-968-5151 in the fall to learn about available clinics.

PET LICENSING

Pet owners are required by local law to license their pets every year. In order for the license to be issued, the owner must present proof that a licensed veterinarian has vaccinated the pet against rabies and that the duration of immunity from that vaccination extends through at least ten months of the twelve-month licensing period.

The Health Commission has learned that pet licensures seem to be declining and we want to tell you why it is important to license your dogs and cats. Licensing your pet allows local authorities to identify the animal and its owners if it happens to get loose.

The license tag enables the quick and easy return of your loved animal. In addition, licensure proves that the pet is appropriately vaccinated against rabies. If your pet happens to bite someone then its license tells local authorities that it is current on its rabies vaccine and the bite victim has less to worry about. Your license fees are used toward the provision of animal control services. A licensed animal control officer is available to provide professional services when an animal incident occurs. Finally, failure to license your pet may lead to enforcement action and penalties by the health department and/or police department. So, please license your pet by contacting the municipal building. It is one sign of a responsible pet owner.

NOROVIRUS-THE STOMACH BUG

The media has recently reported on several outbreaks both locally and out of state involving Norovirus, but what is it? It is also known as Norwalk-like virus, but is more often called viral gastroenteritis, stomach flu and food poisoning.

Norovirus causes inflammation of the stomach and the intestines resulting in diarrhea, vomiting and stomach pain. It can make you feel extremely ill with vomiting and diarrhea several times a day, however, most people feel better within a day or two.

Noroviruses are highly contagious and easily transmitted. This is why we often hear about significant numbers of cases or outbreaks. Most people can still spread the virus for up to 3 days from the moment they begin feeling ill and some for as long as 2 weeks. Contact with those who are sick, or even items a sick person has touched can easily make others ill. In order to help prevent the transfer of norovirus take the following actions:

- ◆ Practice property hand hygiene. Wash your hands carefully and frequently with soap and water, especially after using the bathroom, changing diapers or caring for infected patients.
- ◆ Carefully wash fruits and vegetables and cook shellfish thoroughly before eating them.
- ◆ Avoid preparing food while sick.
- ◆ Clean contaminated surfaces and disinfect with bleach based household cleaner or a solution made by adding 5-25 tablespoons of household bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- ◆ Thoroughly wash contaminated laundry.

For more information see: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus.htm>

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission will be reinvigorating its strategic planning efforts in the spring of 2013. In order to make the final document a realistic and valuable tool Health Officer Kevin Sumner strongly encourages the input of Commission residents. Are there strengths, opportunities, or activities of the Commission that you truly value or that you question? We would love to hear your thoughts on what you think your local health department should be doing and what it

should look to accomplish over the next few years. Let your thoughts and voice be heard. The Health Officer Kevin Sumner would love to talk to you. Contact him at 732-968-5151 ext. 1 or by email at ksumner@middlebrookhealth.org. The Commission staff and members want to assure that we are providing the best and most important services, in an effective and efficient manner.

GENERATOR SAFETY

The impact of Superstorm Sandy is still fresh in people's minds; the frequency of storm events appears to be increasing; winter is still here and snow storms are a possibility; spring is just around the corner and with it comes spring storms. All of these events may result in power outages. For all these reasons, and since there were many unfortunate generator related events in the recent past, the Commission would like to remind you of some basic safety measures for generator use.

- Generators should NEVER be used indoors or in an attached garage; Only operate a generator outdoors in a well-ventilated, dry area, away from air intakes to the home, including doors and windows, to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Be sure to have properly operating Carbon Monoxide detectors in your home, especially around sleeping areas.
- Do not plug a portable generator into an electrical outlet in your home or garage. The correct way to use a generator is to connect a heavy-duty, outdoor-rated power cord to the generator. Appliances can then be connected to the power cord.
- Do not connect your generator directly to your home's wiring. A generator that is directly connected to your home's wiring can 'backfeed' into the power lines connected to your home, increasing risks of shock and electrocution.

You can learn more about generator safety from the Federal Emergency Management Agency at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/co/generator.shtm>.