

Hotline Case Study: Bats in the Cabin

At an overnight camp, a bat was reported in the sleeping quarters of a cabin. The camp management searched and could not find a bat, so they were under the assumption that the bat was no longer in the sleeping cabin. Under the assumption that the bat was gone, the camp directors had the kids sleep in this space for the remainder of the week. After the kids went home a call to the camp came from a camper parent, who is also a doctor, that all these kids need to get a rabies vaccine due to the situation. The camp was unaware that if a bat was found in sleeping quarters that this was the course of action.

Policies and Risk Management — Questions to Consider

- What is the camp's policy on wildlife in cabins?
- Are there any relocation policies for campers if wildlife, especially bats, are found in a cabin?
- What risk management and liability considerations are needed?
- Who might you consult with to come up with a solid action plan?
- Who might be contacted to help with the removal of wildlife?
- Do you have a communication plan in place to share information with families/parents/guardians? What about communication with the media?

Staff Training — Questions to Consider

- How are staff trained to manage wildlife at camp?
- What resources are available to staff if they encounter wildlife at camp?
- How are staff trained to handle communication with families/parents/guardians?

Key Takeaways

- Have clear policies and procedures on the health and safety of campers and staff when it comes to wildlife at camp.
- Partnering with local health services is incredibly important.
- Have a policy of when families/parents/guardians are contacted if situations arise at camp.

Resources

- [CDC — Preventing Rabies from Bats](#)
- [Bats in Homes and Buildings](#)

Articles

- [The CampLine — Bats at Camp](#)

- [*The CampLine* — Rabies Awareness with a Camp Perspective](#)
- [*The CampLine* — Rabies Exposure or Not?](#)