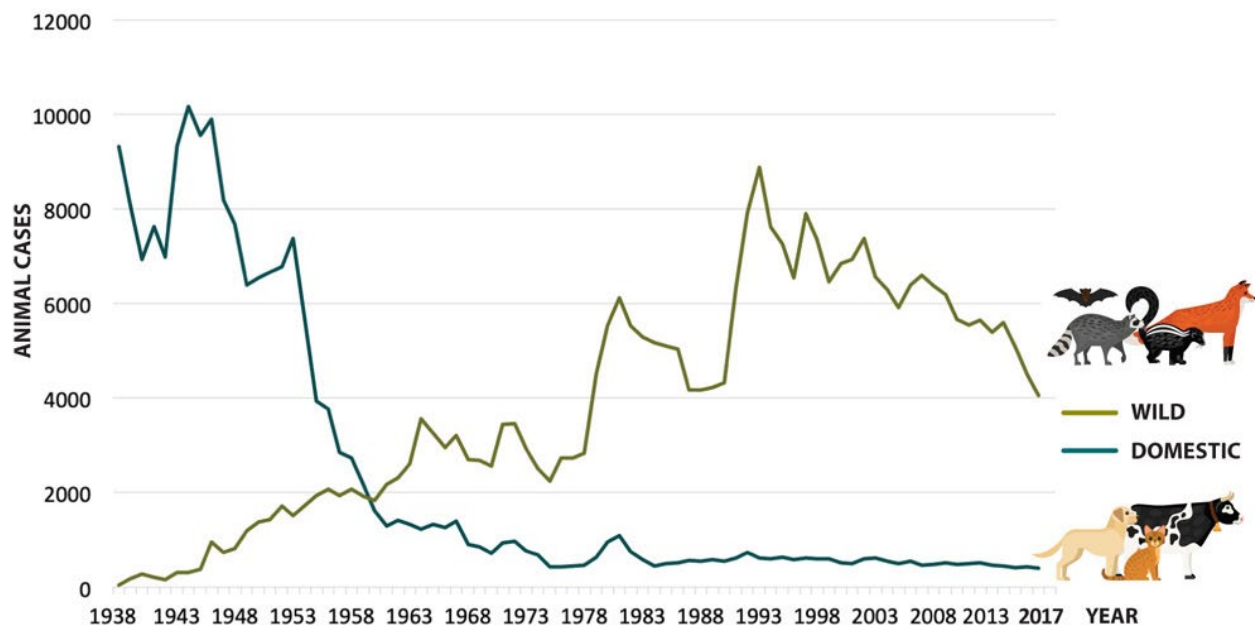


# Rabies

Rabies is a disease of the nervous system caused by a virus. It results from an exposure to the saliva of an animal infected with rabies. Rabies can be spread to a person or pet when they are bitten or in contact with the saliva of a rabid animal. In recent history, more wild animals than domestic animals test positive with rabies. Rabies is a fatal, but 100% preventable disease.

## Animal Cases of Rabies by Year in the U.S.



\*infographic created by [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



*In Nebraska, during 2017 and 2018, 41 animals tested positive for rabies. Over 65% of these animals were bats. The remaining 35% were comprised of skunks, cats, horses, and cows.*

*Wildlife that are infected by rabies usually act uncharacteristically. Nocturnal animals may be seen in daylight. Animals may show uncoordinated behaviors like walking in circles or compulsive actions.*



*Only mammals can be infected with rabies. Some mammals are more likely to be infected than others. Skunks, raccoons, bats, foxes, and coyotes are more likely to be infected. Rodents, rabbits, and hares almost never get rabies.*

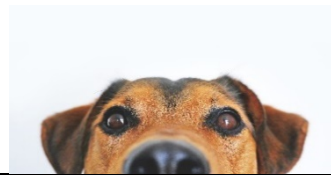
## How do rabies affect humans?

During the incubation period (the time between exposure to an infection and the first appearance of symptoms), the virus travels through muscle tissue to the mammal's nerves. The virus then travels through the nerves to the brain. Once the rabies virus reaches to the brain, it causes swelling, and symptoms of rabies begin to appear. Once symptoms appear, it is too late to begin treatment. Rabies is always fatal. If you have been exposed to a potentially rabid animal, contact your healthcare provider.

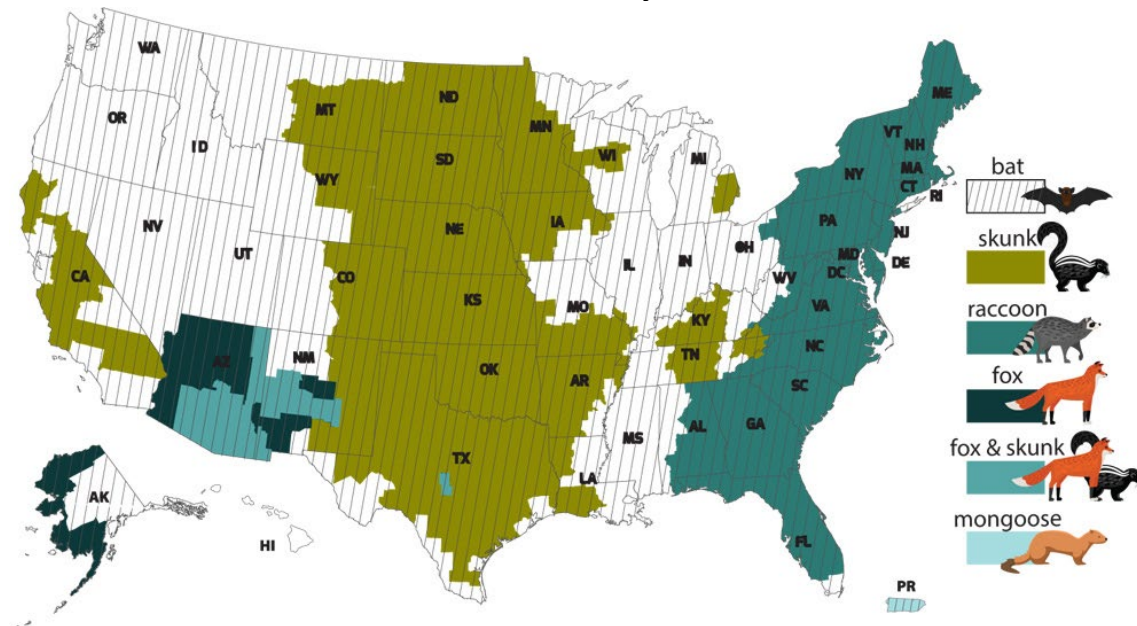


*If you are concerned that your pet has been exposed to rabies, contact your veterinarian about the vaccination status of your pet. If your pet is immunized, it will need an immediate booster. If your animal has not been immunized, it should be quarantined in an approved facility for 4-6 months or euthanized.*

*The most important way to prevent rabies for owners is to vaccinate their pets. In recent history, human cases of rabies have been decreasing due to this practice. Most human cases have been contracted through exposure to a domestic animal that was unvaccinated and infected through contact with a rabid animal. Both humans and domestic animals should avoid contact with feral and wild animals as much as possible.*



### Common Carriers of Rabies by Location in the U.S.



\*Infographic created by [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)