



Don't Forget About Exercise!

The Michigan Penal Codes (1931, Public Act 328, as amended) requires that all vertebrate animals in the State of Michigan receive an adequate level of exercise to "maintain the animal in a state of good health." This means that vertebrate animals at pet stores must also receive exercise. This law is enforced by local law enforcement. Failure to provide adequate exercise is considered neglect and is punishable by law. The Michigan Department of Agriculture advises all licensed pet stores to work with their veterinarian to develop an appropriate exercise plan (type of exercise, frequency of exercise, and length of exercise) for all animals at the pet store to keep all of the animals in good health. A sample plan may include access to exercise wheels for hamsters and daily rotation into a play room for dogs. MDA recommends that a copy of the exercise plan as well as documentation of the exercise actually provided to the animals be on file at the store.

Changes Ahead!

Your pet shop renewal application will look very different this year! This is because the Michigan Department of Agriculture is standardizing licensing across the department. As a part of this project, all applications for all licenses were standardized, and, whenever possible, consolidated. Future projects will include allowing licensees to use credit cards as well as obtain licenses from the internet.

The Turtle Health Advisory Sheet

As a reminder, turtle eggs or small turtles can only be sold for bone fide scientific, educational, or exhibition purposes. They can not be sold as pets. The Turtle Health Advisory Sheet has been revised. Anyone who will be selling or distributing turtle eggs or live turtle with shell lengths smaller than 4 inches must provide the purchaser with this document.



Please dispose of your current copies and replace then with the revised version. The revised version can be obtained by going to www.michigan.gov/mda-licensing, clicking on "Animal Related Licensing," clicking on "Pet Shops," scrolling down and clicking on "Turtle Health Advisory Sheet," then clicking on "Download this file in PDF format." Please print this document, make copies, and provide to purchasers of small turtles and eggs. If you cannot access this document, you may contact the department at 517-373-1077 to obtain a copy of this document.

Salmonella: A Hidden Danger

There is a rumor going around that small turtles no longer carry salmonella, a bacteria which causes serious illness. This is not true! In fact, most reptiles carry salmonella. Many people become ill every year from contact with reptiles. Every year 1.4 million people become infected with Salmonella (non-Typhoid). It is estimated that 6 % of these people contracted salmonella from contact with reptiles. Of this 1.4 million, about 15,000 people are hospitalized and about 400 die. Children and immunocompromised people are most at risk of acquiring Salmonella from reptiles. Reptiles with salmonella do not appear ill. The bacteria is passed to people through handling the reptile. Signs of salmonella infection mimic that of the flu and can include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Your best bet is to assume that all reptiles have salmonella. Employees, purchasers, and adopters of reptiles can help protect themselves from salmonella by:

- ❖ Washing their hands well with soap and water after handling reptiles
- ❖ Regularly cleaning the reptiles enclosure and any surface that the reptile may have had contacted with soap and water
- ❖ Consider wearing gloves when handling reptiles and cleaning reptile enclosures

- ❖ Keeping the reptile away from surfaces that have contact with food, including sinks, dishes, glasses, countertops, etc.
- ❖ Discouraging a reptile from wandering about the pet shop, shelter, or a home
- ❖ Discouraging children and immunocompromised people from acquiring reptiles
- ❖ Never allowing small turtles to be sold as pets. Many of the recent cases of Salmonella in children have involved contact with small turtles!

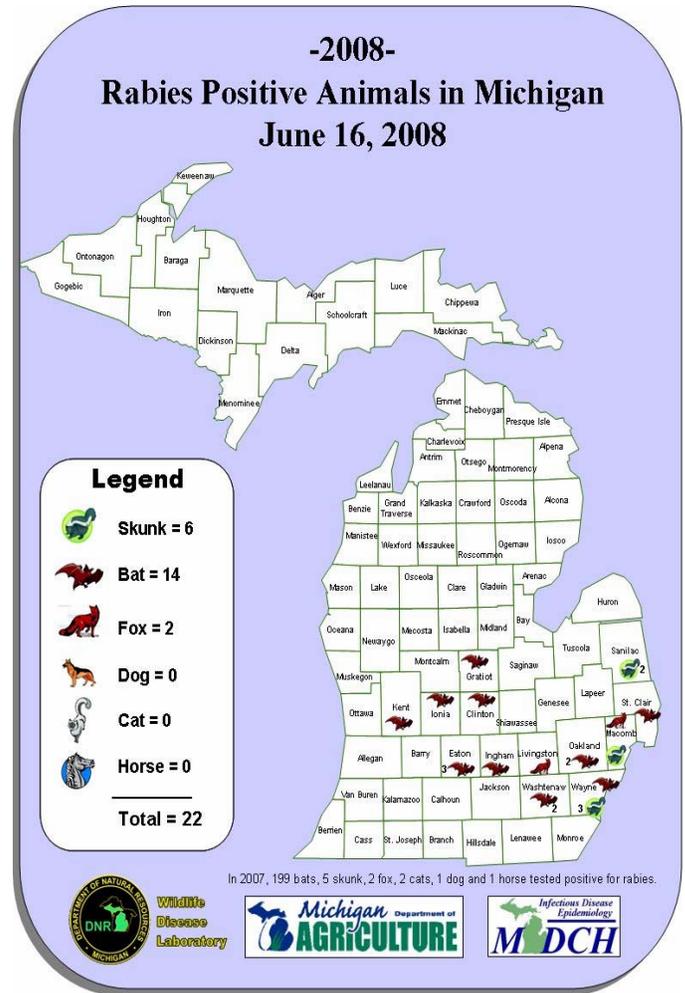
For more information on Salmonella in reptiles, go to: www.cdc.gov/Features/ReptilesSalmonella/.



Rabies Update

Last year was a record year in terms of the total number of confirmed rabies cases and samples submitted to the Michigan Department of Community Health's laboratory. There were a total of 210 animals confirmed to have rabies in 2007 in Michigan including 199 bats, 5 skunks, 2 fox, 2 cats, 1 dog, and 1 horse. Unfortunately, no one knows why there were so many cases last year.

Thus far, it appears that 2008 is posing itself to be an active year as well. As of June 16, 2008, there have been 22 animals confirmed to have rabies including 14 bats, 6 skunks, and 2 fox which is comparable with the number of confirmed positives at this time last year. The lab has actually received more samples this year compared with last year. As of June 6, 2008, the lab has received 1,038 specimens compared to 877 specimens that had been received at the same time last year. For current totals and geographical distributions of animals confirmed to have rabies, go to www.michigan.gov/rabies, click on "Testing Tables and Maps," click on "Maps of Rabies Positive Animals in Michigan," and then click on the Michigan map image next to the caption "Michigan Rabies Positive Cases, 2008."



If you have further questions or concerns, feel free to call the Michigan Department of Agriculture at 517-373-1077 or the Michigan Department of Community Health at 517-335-8165.



Compliance Update

In 2007, the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) held 7 evidentiary hearings with pet stores. The reasons for the hearings involved various concerns including failing to maintain intake and disposition records for animals, failing to provide valid health certificates to purchasers, selling animals under 8 weeks of age, operating a pet shop without a license, failing to maintain adequate ventilation in the pet store, failing to adequately clean the store, failing to seek timely veterinary care for ill or injured animals, and/or failing to control pests at the store. Administrative fines totaling \$450 were collected as a result of these hearings. A pet store operating without a license was ordered to no longer operate as a pet store. All facilities came into compliance.

Thus far in 2008, MDA has held 4 evidentiary hearings with pet stores. The reasons for the hearings included failing to maintain intake and disposition records, failing to provide valid health certificates to purchasers, operating a pet shop without a license, failing to seek veterinary care for ill or injured animals, overcrowding animals in cages, failing to adequately clean, failing to isolate ill animals from healthy animals, and/or failing to control pests. Administrative fines totaling \$1400 were collected as a result of these hearings. A store operating without a license agreed to not operate as a pet shop unless licensed. All facilities are coming into compliance.

Prevent your store from being called to an evidentiary hearing. Remember:

- A pet store must maintain intake and disposition records for at least two years on all mammals that are not livestock or rodents. Records must include the name and address from where the animal was acquired, the date the animal was acquired, a description of the animal (breed, sex, color, and weight), and the date and type of disposition (sale, return to breeder, death, etc). Records should be kept on site for the department to review. MDA has an official form that can be used for recording the acquisition and disposition information. You may access this form by going to www.michigan.gov/mda-licensing, clicking on "Animal Related Licensing," clicking on "Pet Shops," and then clicking on "Pet Shop Animal Record Form."
- A pet store must consult with a veterinarian promptly whenever an animal becomes ill or injured. Documentation supporting that a veterinarian has been contacted should be maintained with the animal's records. Also, be sure to isolate ill animals from healthy ones at the earliest signs of disease. Do not return the animal back to the healthy population until your veterinarian feels it is safe to do so.
- Never sell or offer an animal for sale that is under 8 weeks of age. Animals received by a store that are under 8 weeks of age should either be kept off the sale floor until they are 8 weeks of age, or placed on the sale floor with a sign noting that the animal is "not for sale at this time."
- A store must take measure to prevent vermin. Food should be stored off the floor

- in a dedicated room. All open food, including treats, must be stored in closed containers. Refrigeration should be available if you have partially consumed cans of food. If vermin are present in the store, the store must take action to remove the vermin from the store such as contacting a pest removal company.
- All ferrets, cats, and dogs must be sold with a current health certificate. Certificates expire thirty days from the last date a veterinarian certified the animal to be free of communicable disease. Therefore, animals for sale should be examined at least every thirty days. All information requested on the certificate must be present.
 - Both the store and the animal enclosures must be kept clean. Feces and urine need to be removed from the cages as necessary to prevent the animals from becoming soiled and to prevent odors. For dogs and cats, an animal's enclosure needs to be cleaned multiple times a day. For other animals, an animal's enclosure needs to be cleaned at least daily.
 - A store must maintain proper ventilation. Ventilation must be such that there are no drafts, odors, or moisture condensation. MDA advises 10-15 air changes per hour to maintain adequate ventilation.