

OSDH/OADDL Rabies Specimen Submission Instructions

Animal rabies testing is conducted at no cost to the submitter on acceptable animal specimens as detailed in the *Specimen Preparation* sections of this document. Specimens sent to the lab that do not meet acceptable status may still be testable, but may incur charges for brain removal (e.g., removal of brain from the skull of a horse or cow) or body disposal (e.g., submitting entire animal body in place of head only).

Shipment cost and field preparation of animal rabies specimens are at the submitter expense.

If you have questions about the need to test an animal rabies specimen, call the OSDH Epi-on-Call at 405-426-8710. Epidemiologists are available to assist 24/7.

Rabies specimen shipping containers are available to veterinarians and other appropriately trained animal care professionals at no cost by calling OADDL at 405-744-6623.

Specimen Preparation:

DO NOT SHIP LIVE ANIMALS

Acceptable Specimens:

1. **Head only** submissions for moderate-sized animals such as dogs, cats, skunks, raccoons.
 - Large animal heads may be submitted for testing if hand-delivered during normal business hours, however there are charges for extraction of the brain.
2. **Whole animals** that are less than 12 inches long (exclusive of tail) such as bats and skunks will incur no additional charge.
 - Intact animal submissions over 12 inches long (exclusive of tail) will incur additional charges for decapitation and disposal.
 - Disposal fees do not apply for wildlife animals.
3. **Intact brain** submissions require both the brain and brain stem. Failure to submit both the brain and brain stem will, in most cases, result in an unsatisfactory test result.

CAUTION: *Because the brain, spinal cord and saliva of infected animals may contain rabies virus, it is recommended that only veterinarians, animal control officers, or others who have been appropriately trained (and adequately vaccinated) euthanize animals and / or remove brains for submission for rabies testing. Fees may be incurred by the submitter for euthanasia and preparing the animal brain and brain stem specimen for shipment to OADDL for testing.*

Unacceptable Specimens:

- **LIVE ANIMALS ARE NOT ACCEPTED** * (*see below*)
- Animals euthanized by clubbing or shooting in the head can still be tested but there may be so much damage to the brain that the test results are unsatisfactory.
- Animals raised/confined to a cage (hamsters, gerbils, mice, rats, rabbits, etc.) with no access to the outdoors or other animals.
- Wild or domestic birds (including chickens), turtles, or other reptiles;
- Wild rodents (mice, rats, etc.) that have not been in direct contact with other animals or people.
- Fixed specimen in formalin or other preservative.

Call OSDH Epi-on-Call at 405 426 8710 if you are unsure when to rabies test.

*Under certain circumstances, a live bat can be submitted to OADDL for rabies testing:

- The live bat is hand-delivered during normal business hours.
- The live bat is confined in a closed container.

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Keep Specimen Chilled

- Refrigerate (32 - 45°F) or chill the specimen as soon as possible after death and submit to the lab as quickly as possible.

Rabies Submission Form:

A *Rabies Submission Form* must be completed for **each specimen** submitted. **Specimens received without documented exposure information** are held pending contact with the submitter/owner; **this will delay testing**. Please, provide a current email address to expedite reporting of rabies test results. The form is available to download and complete electronically on our [website](#).

IMPORTANT:

- EXPOSURE INFORMATION** for all individuals exposed to the potentially rabid animal along with primary contact phone number is required in the event additional information and/or follow-up is needed.

EXPOSURE INFORMATION Required! Testing will not be performed without this information		EXPOSED INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION List others exposed on the back of form	
TYPE	LOCATION OF EXPOSURE		
☐ Human ☐ Pet/Domestic Animal	☐ Owner's Home ☐ Other	Name	
Bitten by an animal? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Address	Address	
Non-bite exposure? ☐ No ☐ Yes (e.g., saliva, blood, scratch)	City	City	
Significant potential exposure? ☐ No ☐ Yes (e.g., bat in room with sleeping individual)	County	County	
	State Zip	State Zip	
		Phone: () -	
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT Use back of form if more space is needed			
SPECIMEN SUBMISSION INFORMATION		Date Shipped / / Send Report to ☐ Owner ☐ Both	

OSDH/OADDL Rabies Specimen Submission Instructions

Preparing Specimen for Shipment

- Shipping containers and packaging materials for rabies specimens are available to county health departments and veterinarians at no charge upon request. See the “**Quick Guide**” instructions on the last page if using OSDH-provided boxes.
 - Similar containers and packaging materials are acceptable provided they comply with federal regulations for shipping Biological Substance, Category B materials (see 49 CFR 173.199 at eCFR.gov and UPS websites).
- Place the specimen in a sealable, leak-proof storage bag (e.g., heavy-duty, zip lock style) with sufficient absorbent material (e.g., paper towels or newspapers) to absorb any residual blood or fluids during transport.
NOTE: If the head has sharp protuberances (e.g., shattered bone, quills), wrap the head in layers of newspaper before placing it in the bag to prevent tearing of the bag.
 - Place the sealed bag containing the specimen inside another bag (preferably an orange/red biohazardous bag) and then zip-lock or tightly twist the top of the bag and fold it over and seal using a rubber band or tape.
 - Place the double bagged specimen in a Styrofoam box. Add packing material as needed.
 - Add frozen gel packs to ensure the specimen(s) will remain cold for at least 48 hours. Avoid using ice as it commonly leaks in transit. If unavoidable, double-bag and seal the ice securely.
 - Close the Styrofoam box, then place the Styrofoam box inside a rigid outer container (cardboard box).
 - Place completed *Rabies Specimen Submission Form* in a clear plastic zip-lock bag, and place *on top of the Styrofoam box*, inside the outer container.
 - Close and seal the lid to the outer container with packing tape.

Hand Delivery

Rabies specimens may be delivered 24/7/365 to:

Oklahoma Animal Diagnostic Laboratory (OADDL), 1950 W Farm Rd. Stillwater, OK 74078

Regular Business Hours, Monday-Friday, 8am – 5pm

- Submit specimens at the **Receiving Entrance** on the west side of building.

After Hours submissions

- Whole body submissions, live bats or submissions that are not properly packaged** must be submitted during OADDL’s Regular Business hours, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm or weekends/holidays 8am-5pm by appointment only, call 405-744-6623 for the necropsy on-call employee.
- Upon arrival at OADDL, contact Oklahoma State University Police at 405-744-6523.
 - OSU PD will provide entrance into OADDL for placement of submission in the Rabies Refrigerator.
- For safety reasons, only properly boxed submissions will be accepted after hours.

OSDH/OADDL Rabies Specimen Submission Instructions

Preparing Container for Shipping

Overnight carriers e.g., UPS, or local courier service, (FedEx will not transport OSDH Rabies boxes)

- Packaging and shipping must comply with Biological Substance, Category B as indicated below.
 - Shipping charges must be paid by the sender. [UPS labels can be created on OADDL website.](#)
NOTE: an OADDL account number is required to generate a UPS label. If you do not have one, please call the lab at 405-744-6623 to obtain one.
 - Check for availability of next-day delivery.
 - UPS may not deliver shipments to the OADDL on weekends or state holidays.
1. Place “Ship-to” and “Return” address labels on the outside of the sealed container; a place for this information may be indicated on the carrier-provided documents.
 2. Ensure that a diamond-shaped UN3373 (Biological Substance, Category B) label is displayed on the outside of the outer container; may be available from carrier, purchased commercially, or printed from the **Quick Guide** on the last page.
 3. Place the name and a 24/7 telephone number of an emergency contact person knowledgeable about the shipment of the rabies specimen on a label on outside of outer container; a place for this information may be indicated on the carrier-provided documents.
 4. The package is ready to ship.

Testing and Reporting:

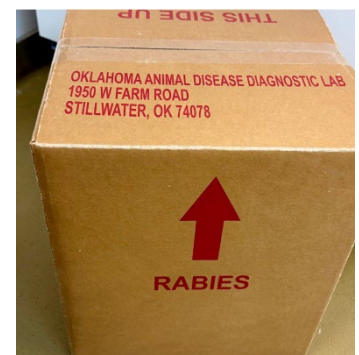
- Routine testing is conducted **Monday through Friday**, excluding state holidays. Specimens received by 10:30 am are usually reported on the same day. Specimens received after 10:30 am are usually reported the next working day.
- Specimens received after 10:30 am on Fridays and weekends are not tested on the weekend but rather are tested and reported the next working day. Rabies testing also occurs on weekends when a state holiday precedes or follows the weekend.
- ***Urgent requests for testing on weekends or holidays may be made in consultation with the OSDH Acute Disease Service Epidemiologist-On-Call at (405) 426-8710 (24/7/365 availability).***
- In rare but possible instances specimens can appear inconclusive for reasons such as autolysis, gunshot wound or other trauma to the head or neck area.
- Rabies results may be reported by telephone or email. There is no charge for testing.
 - ***NOTE: Some instances of submission may generate charges see acceptable specimens (pg. 1).***
 - Negative rabies results are reported by email.
 - Positive/inconclusive results will be immediately followed up on by the OSDH Epidemiologist-On-Call so that any potentially exposed humans and animals can be assessed. The result will also be emailed the following day to the original submitter.

Laboratory Contact:

For questions regarding rabies exposure risks for humans or animals, or to find out if an animal should be tested for rabies, call the OSDH and ask for the Epidemiologist-on-call at (405) 426-8710. For additional information about how to submit animal samples for rabies testing, call the OSDH/OADDL Rabies Lab at (405) 744-6623.

QUICK GUIDE

1. Place **UN3373** and **Emergency Contact** labels on outside of outer, cardboard box.
2. Write name of **emergency contact person** and **24/7 contact number** on the Emergency Contact label.
3. Place specimen in heavy-duty plastic bag. If necessary, wrap specimens in newspaper to prevent sharp edges from puncturing bag.
4. Place supplied absorbent material in bag with specimen then tightly seal bag using a rubber band or tape; bag must be **leak-proof**—check that it is tightly sealed.
5. Place sealed bag into (orange) biohazard bag and tightly seal the top of the bag using a rubber band or tape. Place biohazard bag inside the inner box.
6. Place sufficient frozen gel pack(s) on top of specimen bag to keep cold for 48 hours and securely close the interior box.
7. Place the completed **Rabies Specimen Submission Form** inside a clear Ziplock bag and set it on top of the Styrofoam lid.
8. Seal the lid of the outer box with packing tape
9. Send to:
OKLAHOMA ANIMAL DISEASE DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY
1950 W FARM RD. STILLWATER, OK 74078-0001



NOTE: Shipper is responsible for arranging transportation and paying transport costs.

QUICK GUIDE

The following **UN3373 label** is properly sized for marking the outer package of “Biological Substance, Category B” shipments. This can be printed and firmly attached to the outer package if you do not have access to these labels.

