



March 31, 2008

The Honourable Donna Cansfield  
Ministry of Natural Resources  
6630 - 99 Wellesley St W, 6th Floor, Whitney Block  
Toronto ON M7A 1W3

Dear Minister Cansfield:

**Re: Rabies Vaccine Accessibility for Animals and Skunk Oral Rabies Vaccine Bait Program**

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It is the position of the Board of Health for the Grey Bruce Health Unit that:

- low-cost rabies clinics be available for dogs and cats
- farmers with medication certification be allowed to purchase, administer and certify the rabies vaccine for their own animals
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) provide skunk baiting either through their program or provide the product for local land owners.

To that end, meeting on March 28, 2008, the Board of Health, for the Grey Bruce Health Unit passed the following resolution and we respectfully request your support of, and action on this matter.

**Resolution #2008-39**

**WHEREAS** the Grey Bruce Health Unit area continues to have rabid animal cases; and

**WHEREAS** the rabies vaccine is only available to veterinarians to administer to animals as per regulation 567; and

**WHEREAS** farmers already purchase other vaccines from veterinarian clinics and routinely administer to their farm animals; and

**WHEREAS** there is a Livestock Medicine Education Program organized by Ridgetown College providing farmers access to a one day course to learn injection sites, proper storage & handling, disposal of sharps, reading labels and record keeping, with certification every five years; and

**WHEREAS** since the fall 2004, the low-cost rabies vaccination clinics in Grey and Bruce Counties were discontinued whereby individuals must now take pets to their local veterinarian for rabies vaccination including a physical exam; and

**WHEREAS** a physical exam of the animal is required before administration of the rabies vaccine, which is cost prohibitive to many people; and

**WHEREAS** the rabid skunk populations in Grey and Dufferin Counties are the subject of on-going research conducted by the Ministry of Natural Resources using oral rabies vaccine bait in selected agricultural and forested areas;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Board of Health for the Grey Bruce Health Unit requests the Government of Ontario to provide low-cost rabies immunization clinics, allow farmers to purchase rabies vaccine as they currently do with other vaccines for their farm animals, and that the Ministry of Natural Resources provide wide-spread oral rabies vaccine baiting in areas where rabid skunks have been identified; and

**FURTHER THAT** they may be so advised, copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Finance, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health, alPHa, local Members of Provincial and Federal Parliament, all Ontario Boards of Health, College of Veterinarians, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and Agriculture Canada.

Building Healthy Communities Together,

*Original Signed By*

Hazel Lynn, MD, FCFP, MHSc  
Medical Officer of Health  
HL/ks

Copies to:

The Honourable Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance  
The Honourable George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Rural Affairs  
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health (A)  
Ms. Allison Stuart, Assistant Deputy Minister (A)  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa)  
Larry J. Miller, MP Grey-Bruce-Owen Sound  
Bill Murdoch, MPP Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound  
Carol Mitchell, MPP Huron-Bruce  
Jim Wilson, MPP Simcoe-Grey  
Ontario Boards of Health  
College of Veterinarians  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
Agriculture Canada