MIKE LUKAS
Sheriff

OFFICE OF SHERIFF • PORTAGE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

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To All Portage County Residents,

It is that time of year again when dog owners should begin to remember their obligations to comply with state laws and county ordinances regarding animal licensing and other health concerns. One of the primary purposes of these laws is to improve public health and safety by requiring that ***dogs must be vaccinated against rabies and subsequently licensed***.

This is an important issue in that rabies is present throughout Wisconsin, including Portage County. Rabies is a viral disease affecting the central nervous system. It is transmitted from infected mammals to man and is virtually always fatal once symptoms appear. The most common carriers of rabies are raccoons, skunks, foxes, coyotes, and bats. All of these animals are common to our area. Our pets can easily be exposed and then go on to expose people.

State law and Portage County ordinances, **require all dogs to be licensed**, and that rabies vaccinations be current. Dog licenses can be easily obtained from your municipal treasurer, and while annual license fees can vary by municipality, $8 – $10 for a neutered or spayed dog is typical. Licenses can also be obtained from the Humane Society of Portage County – and they are open on Saturdays and Sundays if you can't get to your municipal clerk during normal business hours.

The Sheriff's Office takes dog licensing seriously because of the potential impact on public health and safety. We have teamed up with the Humane Society to enforce licensing and vaccination laws. **A citation to the owner of an unlicensed dog can cost between $169.00 and $263.50**.

Please do your part to safeguard our community by vaccinating and licensing your dogs. Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

Mike Lukas
Portage County Sheriff