

## Bat is Orange County's 5th case of rabies this year

### CHAPEL HILL

A state laboratory confirmed Orange County's fifth case of rabies this year, when a bat was removed from a home in Mebane last week.

The county had 10 confirmed cases last year and 23 the year before.

The latest incident happened Wednesday when a bat was spotted inside the fireplace of a Mebane residence.

The residents immediately got out of the house and called Animal Control to remove the animal for rabies testing.

Two dogs and a cat were in different parts of the house when the bat was discovered, but because no one saw the bat enter, there was no way to rule out the possibility of exposure, officials said.

Because of the vaccination history of the pets, they were all able to receive booster shots under North Carolina's rabies laws. When there is "a reasonable suspicion of exposure," a dog, cat, or ferret with a valid vaccination history must receive a booster shot within 96 hours. By contrast, an unvaccinated animal must either be killed or quarantined for a period up to four months.

A Health Department nurse contacted the residents to evaluate their risk of rabies exposure and whether they needed post-exposure treatment to protect themselves from rabies.

Of the few cases of rabies in humans in the United States in recent years, most have been traced to bats, officials said. Because bat bites can be undetectable to the human eye, officials say it is critical that a bat inside an occupied dwelling be safely contained without human contact and that people immediately contact their animal control program or 911 if there is any possibility of exposure.

Orange County Animal Services will hold two low-cost rabies vaccination clinics this week:

- Thursday, Sept. 29, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Eno River Farmers Market, 144 E Margaret Lane in Hillsborough
- Saturday, Oct. 1, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Animal Services Center, 1601 Eubanks Road in Chapel Hill.

The cost for rabies vaccinations is \$10. Clinic dates for the rest of 2016 are posted at <http://orangecountync.gov/departments/animalservices/rabies.php>

For more information, call Animal Services at 919.942.7387.

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/chapel-hill-news/article104210511.html#storylink=cpy>



## **Carrboro Police Again Successfully Use Naloxone to Reverse Overdose**

By [Blake Hodge](#)

*Posted September 26, 2016 at 12:54 pm*



Carrboro Police have once again utilized naloxone to reverse a drug overdose.

Officials say the patient in this case was transported to UNC Hospitals for treatment. Administering naloxone reverses the effects of overdose, which allows an opportunity for medical intervention to save the life of the user.

Carrboro Police have been on the forefront of the wave of law enforcement carrying the reversal drug. CPD partnered with Orange County EMS, the Orange County Health Department and the North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition to go forward with the program.

Authorities say this marks the third time an officer has used naloxone since officers began carrying the drug in October 2014. The first instance was a [successful overdose reversal](#) in January 2015. Just a few weeks later, in late February 2015, the second use of naloxone was during the [reversal of a triple overdose](#).

Law enforcement officials have been more open to carrying naloxone and thinking about overdose as a health problem rather than a law-enforcement issue, even though illegal drugs or illegal use of prescription drugs is the cause of some overdoses.

Police continue to ask that you call 911 if you suspect someone is in an overdose state and remain with the subject of concern.

## Police, Campus Health carry Naxolone, a drug that can reverse an overdose

HARRIS WHELESS AND SAMANTHA SCOTT | PUBLISHED 09/30/16 12:40AM

At 4:31 a.m. on Sept. 23, Carrboro Police received a 911 call reporting a drug overdose on the 500 block of Jones Ferry Road.

Officer Lori McLamb was first to report to the scene, where she found a 20-year-old woman unconscious with labored breathing.

Because the woman used a combination of drugs, her friends were unsure which she overdosed on. McLamb, deciding the woman overdosed on opioids, administered two milligrams of Naloxone. EMS later administered another two milligrams, saving the victim's life.

Naloxone reverses the effects of an opioid overdose by temporarily binding to the same brain receptors as the opioids. It has now been administered by police six times in Orange County — three times by the Orange County Sherriff's Department and three times by the Carrboro Police Department.

Capt. Chris Atack, spokesperson for the Carrboro police, said annual Naloxone training for police officers is vital to saving lives.

"Opioids have surpassed other drugs, alcohol, guns and car crashes among other things in causes of death," Atack said. "Law enforcement's role is public safety and life-saving, and I think this is a niche tool for law enforcement to create better outcomes for those involved in overdose."

The Carrboro Police Department began training officers to use Naloxone nasal spray during [opioid overdoses](#) in October 2014. In January 2015, it became the first police department to use Naloxone in North Carolina.

“When you’re in an opioid overdose, seconds can count – you’re depriving your brain and body of oxygen, which is certainly a medical emergency,” Atack said. “If law enforcement arrives first, we want to be sure we can do everything possible to reverse the effects of this overdose quickly.”

From 2009-2013, 161 drug overdoses occurred in Orange County. UNC Campus Health Services now stocks Naloxone, too.

Stacy Shelp, spokesperson for the Orange County Health Department, said UNC’s pharmacy will begin to train the public to administer Naloxone on Oct. 12.

Campus Health Services has also taken the initiative to spread awareness.

Amy Sauls, the director of pharmacy for Campus Health Services, said the office began providing free Naloxone kits for students without a prescription one month ago.

“It’s been a drug that we’ve kept here at Campus Health for a long time to reverse any kind of opioid overdose,” she said. “It’s been a drug that’s been around a long time and has been used in hospitals and clinics, but it’s just now in the last several years coming into the spectrum of public use.”

Naloxone is often administered as an injection, but after students said they would prefer a nasal spray, Campus Health went with that option.

Sauls said students can ask for a Naloxone kit at any time without questioning.

“The main purpose is just to save a life,” she said.

Under North Carolina’s Good Samaritan Law, people who witness an overdose can call 911 without risking prosecution against the witness or victim, although the law doesn’t provide immunity for every drug offense.

Dean Blackburn, director of Student Wellness, said opiate abuse goes through increases and decreases every four to six years.

He said Naloxone has an enormous number of advantages with no conceivable drawbacks.

“There’s really no potential for abuse, misuse or misadministration of any kind,” he said. “So the risks are near zero and the benefits are tremendous.”



# Asthma Intervention Program Helps Keep Homes Healthy

By [Steph Beckett](#)

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*Posted October 10, 2016 at 1:24 pm*

Orange County Health Department

Almost 12 percent of Orange County residents reported having asthma in 2011. Only six percent of that number reported earning more than \$50,000 per year.

That's why the Orange County Health Department created Healthy Homes. It's an asthma intervention program that lets the health department assess the air and safety of a given home environment.

"What Healthy Homes looks like is an environmental specialist and a nurse coming to a family's home both to do a medication review with them and to do some in-home assessments to empower the family to do things that they can—that are within their control to prevent some of the asthma exacerbations," said Coby Jansen Austin. She's the Director of Programs and Policy for the Family Success Alliance, and the Board of Health for the Orange County Health Department.

She said the purpose of the program is to reduce emergency room visits and improve asthma symptoms in Orange County homes. Healthy Homes is a pilot program, and won the GlaxoSmithKline "Child Health Recognition Award" in September. The award comes with \$5,000 to buy resources needed for it to continue working.

"With it being a pilot program, we started small," she said. "And I'm hopeful that now we'll be able to have a much larger reach."

Austin said much of what Healthy Homes does is provide homes with affordable methods to get health hazards out. They also often provide residents with mattress and pillow covers, eco-friendly cleaning kits and smoking cessation materials.

They also work with community partners such as the UNC Pediatric Pulmonary Clinic to give nurses asthma safety trainings at schools.

"We try and provide a comprehensive service for the families," Austin said. "And also think about the ways that we can support our community in being better able to support those families."

Austin said, overall the best part about the program, and the reward was that it came from different parts of the community working together.

“We just live in a community that has such great resources that there’s no reason we shouldn’t be able to support these families,” she said. “And you know, all of the partners in the community bring something unique to this, either in terms of data or perspective or skills.”

Specialists from Healthy Homes have visited over 20 family residences so far. They are currently conducting research afterwards with follow-up calls after one, three and six months to see what asthma symptoms remain and whether there have been any emergency department visits after the review.

## **Chapel Hill Coalition Aims to Reduce High Risk Drinking**

By [Joey DeVito](#)

Posted October 13, 2016 at 11:57 am



A new town-gown coalition is working to reduce high risk drinking in Chapel Hill.

In a recent survey, 71 percent of college students and 47 percent of high school seniors here reported using alcohol in the previous 30 days.

The Campus and Community Coalition to Reduce the Negative Impacts of High Risk Drinking are taking on the problem of high-risk drinking that exists in Chapel Hill and various communities. The origins of the group started in 2013 when former Chancellor Holden Thorp and former Chapel Hill Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt convened a group to tackle the issue of binge drinking. Under the name of "The Town Gown Collaborative," spokesman Elinor Landes says they are focused on the environment in which students make decisions about drinking.

"The coalition recommended that the university update its alcohol policy," said Landes. "They've updated it to make it a campus-alcohol policy instead of a student-alcohol policy. That new policy went into effect on August 1st."

The group is also working on a social norms campaign that would promote healthy behaviors and correct incorrect perceptions about campus alcohol culture.

In regards to high school drinking, Landes says they want parents to get the conversation started earlier with their kids.

"Research has proven the impact of having a conversation with your student before they arrive on campus can really have positive effects on decisions that students make around drinking," said Landes.

Landes says there's been a change with the pace and amount of time that students are drinking, particularly before football games.

"The phenomenon of 'pregaming' is gaining popularity," said Landes. "Drinking a high volume of alcohol in a short amount of time is different. One of the messages that the university is sending to parents in their communication at their orientation sessions it's different today."

Coalition membership includes agency partners from the university, town, and county, university students, community members, and downtown bar and restaurant owners. Strategies to address high risk drinking and its impact on the community include public education and updates and additions to policies related to high risk drinking.

Town-gown coalitions to curb drinking on college campuses are nothing new. There are similar groups at Michigan State, Ohio State and the University of Massachusetts. Landes says what makes the Chapel Hill group unique is support from the town.

"The town has committed funding and resources in terms of time and dedication and staff," said Landes. "The university has done the same, but we also have the county health department on board. And the Orange County ABC board. So we have this coalition of folks that includes some unique partners in the health department and in the ABC board."

Landes says the fact that many of these organizations are pitching in shows that Chapel Hill is taking the issue of binge drinking seriously.

## Community coalition will address high-risk drinking

Elle Kehres | 10-19-16

Fighting high-risk drinking in Chapel Hill is a team effort.

The Orange County Health Department, the Orange County ABC Board, UNC and the town of Chapel Hill formed a coalition this year to address potentially dangerous drinking in the community.

The coalition, formally known as the Campus and Community Coalition to Reduce the Negative Impacts of High Risk Drinking, is a joint-funded effort to combat high-risk drinking by implementing several recommendations.

Efforts to create the coalition began in 2014, when a group of stakeholders from UNC and the surrounding community met to analyze data, conduct focus groups and research best practices related to alcohol use in college towns. Their efforts culminated in a report that recommends 22 strategies to address high-risk drinking.

Colleen Bridger, director of the Orange County Health Department, said these recommendations, along with community involvement, will make the coalition effective.

“Research has proven that the most successful approach to addressing alcohol misuse in communities is an ecological or public health approach, and that’s what the coalition is doing,” Bridger said.

In line with one recommendation, Elinor Landess was hired as director of the coalition. She will work on the adoption and implementation of the recommendations.

“The whole framework is unique because we’re addressing the environment rather than the individual,” Landess said. “Our work is part of a larger conversation that is part of the community.”

The coalition discovered that 71 percent of UNC students and 47 percent of high school seniors reported using alcohol in the past 30 days. Their findings also noted that the Chapel Hill Police Department responds to 40-50 alcohol overdose calls every semester, most of which involve UNC students.

“We recognized alcohol misuse as a public health issue and supported the approach the coalition was taking to address the issue in a comprehensive manner,” Bridger said.

Evan Lauterborn, a junior at UNC, is skeptical about the coalition’s influence but is hopeful about its future.

“The culture of partying accompanied by heavy alcohol consumption is one that is deeply ingrained in colleges everywhere,” he said. “However, I also believe that having further advocacy against high-risk behaviors certainly can’t do more harm than good, and it’s a worthy endeavor even if it deters just a few students.”

The first recommendation from the coalition has already gone into effect — UNC passed a new alcohol policy in June and implemented it on Aug. 1, Landess said.

This year’s fall orientation program was the result of the past efforts of the 2014 research group that created the recommendations and new alcohol policy, she said. Parent orientation was revamped to educate families about alcohol awareness.

Landess said the coalition is a long-term process, and they’re focusing on planning this year.