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European-wide Alert About Rabies in France

The European Commission last week issued an urgent notice regarding a European-wide search for people who may have had recent contact with a rabid dog in southwestern France. CDC is providing information about this situation in the event that state and local health departments receive inquiries from persons who may have traveled recently in Europe.

On August 26, laboratory testing at the Pasteur Institute in Paris confirmed that the dog was rabid. The infected dog, a 4-month-old female pup that had been illegally imported into France in July, died on August 21. The rabid animal is thought to have had multiple opportunities to transmit the disease to humans and other animals in southwestern France between August 2 and August 21, according to the European Commission's notice. As of August 31, approximately 300 people (all French) had contacted health authorities about having had possible contact with the rabid dog, and 47 of these persons had been referred for rabies postexposure prophylaxis.

U.S. residents who visited southwestern France (refer to the *Eurosurveillance Weekly* article below for map) and believe they may have had contact with the infected dog should contact their state or local health department.

Additional information about the situation in Europe is available at the following websites:

- A September 6 press release from the European Commission describing the alert:
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/1068&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- A September 2 description of the case in *Eurosurveillance Weekly*:
<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ew/2004/040902.asp#1>
- A September 1 notice on the website of the World Health Organization:
http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_09_01a/en/
- A French government notice (in French) with photos of the rabid dog:
http://www.agriculture.gouv.fr/spip/actualites_a3739.html

For additional information about rabies, please visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies/>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protects people's health and safety by preventing and controlling diseases and injuries; enhances health decisions by providing credible information on critical health issues; and promotes healthy living through strong partnerships with local, national and international organizations.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

