



Humane Euthanasia For Bats Prior to Rabies Testing

Live bats that require rabies testing must be humanely euthanized prior to shipment to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Laboratory (CFIA). Homeowners and Public Health Units can best ensure this by employing the services of a licensed veterinarian or animal control/shelter service.

Live Bat Capture

Prior to arrival at the veterinary clinic or animal shelter, bats should be caught in a small plastic (margarine type) container that can have a lid affixed (container lid or stiff piece of cardboard that can be taped shut.) Those individuals capturing a live bat should be protected with heavy gloves. A video of this technique can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhnV5WJQBA>

Recommended Bat Euthanasia Procedure

The goal of bat euthanasia should be to provide a humane death for the animal while minimizing the risk of exposure to veterinary clinic or animal control/shelter staff. To achieve this the following method can be used:

1. Make sure you are in a closed room and that the individual euthanizing the bat has been previously vaccinated against rabies and has a valid protective rabies titer. Wear gloves such as plastic dishwashing gloves or fabric/leather gloves for protection.
2. Place the closed plastic container, containing the live bat, into a clear plastic bag such as a recycling bag and tie the bag closed to prevent the bat from escaping.
3. While the bag is closed, take the lid off of the plastic container.
4. Empty the bat out of the container into the free space of the closed bag.
5. Locate the bat and working from the outside of the bag, with gloved hands, move the bat towards the corner of the bag.
6. Using the bag to restrain the bat, administer a small amount of euthanol intraperitoneal through the bag.
7. Wait several minutes to ensure the bat is deceased. When death has been confirmed the bat can be safely removed from the large garbage bag and placed in a small clear bag while it awaits collection. Gloves should be worn to do this.
8. Store the bat in the fridge or freezer until an OAVT Rabies Response Program RVT arrives for collection.

Additional bat euthanasia methods can be found at the following links:

[Humane Euthanasia of Bats For Public Health Rabies Testing](#) (Michigan Rabies Working Group)

[Standard Operating Procedure \(SOP\): Bat euthanasia](#) (BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations)