

# ***HEALTHY COLORADO SCHOOLS***



## **BATS ARE BACK**

We have had reports that bats are returning to roosts in Front Range schools. Bats are a valuable component of our environment and consume thousands of insect pests of gardens, crops and forests. All 18 species of bats in the state are classified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife as non-game mammals and are protected by law.

While bats are not considered a major reservoir of rabies (less than 0.5% of bats are infected with rabies), they may still pose a health threat to humans, and should be approached with caution. Physical contact with bats and exposure to bat droppings should be avoided. School sites which regularly encounter bats on the premises should have an on-going student/staff/faculty education program to reduce potential for contact. Contact the local health department if a person or pet has had direct contact with a bat.

The two most common bats are the little brown and big brown bat. The little brown bat accounts for 65% of reported captures along the Front Range foothills. Exclusion is the soundest long-term solution. Exclusions should never be done during the summer breeding season as mothers cannot get back to feed their infants in the roost and they will die.

**Keep Colorado schools pest free**