



LIVINGSTON COUNTY
Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Livingston County Continues Vector-Borne Disease Surveillance and Prevention Program; Encourages Residents to Protect Against Ticks and Mosquitoes

HOWELL, Michigan. - (May 18, 2020) The Livingston County Health Department (LCHD) will continue to participate in a Vector-Borne Disease Surveillance and Prevention Program in coordination with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). LCHD will be providing mosquito and tick monitoring data to MDHHS as part of a statewide system which helps communities track and prepare for emerging diseases.

The main goals of this program are to help identify populations of *Aedes* species mosquitoes which can transmit Zika and other viruses, and deer (or blacklegged) ticks that can spread Lyme disease or other pathogens. This will be done by setting up mosquito traps and tick drags in the county. The program will also support public education on mosquito-borne disease prevention, mosquito control, and tick-borne disease prevention.

As people start to spend more time outside, LCHD wants to remind residents to protect themselves against ticks and mosquitoes. Diseases that are spread to people by mosquitoes and ticks include West Nile virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), and Lyme Disease, all of which have been found in Livingston County. Prevention is the best way to protect yourself and your family.

Tick bites can be prevented by:

- Avoiding tick-infested areas and clearing high grass, brush, and leaf litter around your home.
- Using DEET containing insect repellents. (Do not use on children under 2 months of age).
- Wearing light colored clothing to more easily spot ticks.

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- Performing daily tick checks. Parents should check their children for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and especially in the hair.

Mosquito bites can be prevented by:

- Using insect repellents. For children, apply products with less than 30 percent DEET.
- Wearing long sleeves and spraying clothes with repellent containing permethrin.
- Empty standing water from around your home on a regular basis. Standing water could be found in flowerpots, gutters, buckets, pool covers, pet water dishes, discarded tires, and birdbaths.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes outside. Use air conditioning if possible.

LCHD encourages anyone who finds a tick and wants it identified to submit photos of the tick along with additional information to health@livgov.com. For further information on how to remove a tick and submit it for identification, please visit LCHD's tick page: livgov.com/health/eh/Pages/Ticks.aspx or call Environmental Health at 517-546-9858. To find what repellent is right for you, use the EPA's search tool: <https://bit.ly/2tJJyLl>.

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