



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Livingston County Health Department to Participate in Vector-Borne Disease Surveillance and Prevention Program

HOWELL, Michigan. - (May 22, 2019) This summer, the Livingston County Health Department (LCHD) will be participating 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 surveillance system that will better prepare our community if vector-borne risk of disease is found.

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 at a minimum of five locations and tick drags at a minimum of two locations in the county. The program will also support community projects to educate the public on mosquito-borne disease prevention, mosquito control, and tick-borne disease prevention.

Diseases that are spread to people by mosquitoes and ticks include West Nile virus and Lyme Disease and both 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.
- Performing daily tick checks.

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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.

For more information on these and other diseases that may affect humans or animals, visit www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases. To learn how to remove and submit a tick for identification, please visit <https://bit.ly/2UKansg> or call LCHD at (517) 546-9850. To find what repellent is right for you, use the EPA's search tool: <https://bit.ly/2tIJyLl>.

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