

# LENAWEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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lenaweehealthdepartment.org



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Lenawee County Health Department Vector Borne Disease Surveillance & Prevention Program

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This summer, the Lenawee County Health Department (LCHD) is 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 well as use the surveillance data to notify the public of risks related to emerging vector borne diseases

The LCHD surveillance program will be geared toward identifying populations of potentially invasive *Aedes* species mosquitos capable of transmitting the Zika virus and the blacklegged tick (deer tick) capable of transmitting Lyme disease or other diseases.

How can you Help Prevent Mosquito Borne Diseases:

- Remove old tires, tin cans, buckets, drums, bottles or any water-holding containers from property.
- Keep drains, ditches, and culverts free of weeds and trash so water will drain properly.
- Keep roof gutters free of leaves and other debris.
- Cover trash containers to keep out rainwater.
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets.
- Empty plastic wading pools at least once a week and store indoors when not in use.

- Unused swimming pools should be drained and kept dry during the mosquito season.
- Change the water in birdbaths and plant pots or drip trays at least once each week.
- Store boats covered or upside down, or remove rainwater weekly.
- Keep grass cut and shrubbery well-trimmed around the house so adult mosquitoes will not hide there.
- Make sure ornamental ponds have fish, which will eat mosquito larvae.
- Maintain window screens to be free of holes.
- Wear insect repellent. Choose a product with an active ingredient proven safe and effective by the EPA. These ingredients include:
  - DEET (concentrations of 30% or less are safest)
  - Picaridin
  - IR 3535
  - Oil of lemon eucalyptus
  - Read and follow all instructions on the label for the repellent you choose.

How can you Help Prevent Tick Borne Disease:

- Avoid areas with lots of ticks. Ticks prefer shady, moist areas in wooded and grassy locations. Reducing the leaf litter brush and weeds or clutter around your home can dramatically reduce the number of ticks.
- Use insect repellents. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved repellents for ticks are products which contain; DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Always read and follow the label use directions for proper application of the insect repellent.
- Wear light colored clothing so ticks can be easily spotted.
- Check daily for ticks after being outdoors. Ticks can bite anywhere so check your body carefully. Ticks prefer body creases and areas with hair such as the armpit, groin, ankle and scalp.
- Be sure to inspect your pets for ticks as well. Use of pest repellents and frequent body checks for your furry friend will help keep your pet safe. Discuss with your veterinarian the best options for tick prevention for your pet.

We will continue to monitor our community throughout the remainder of our program.

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The mission of the Lenawee County Health Department is to promote a safe and healthy environment.