



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE FOR
IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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Kalamazoo County Conducting Mosquito Surveillance through September

KALAMAZOO, MI — The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department’s Environmental Health staff will be setting several mosquito traps throughout Kalamazoo County to capture and identify potential disease carrying mosquitoes through September.

Southern Michigan is in the migration pattern of the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito (Asian Tiger Mosquito), a mosquito that can carry the ZIKA virus. Though the mosquito is not currently known to be present in Kalamazoo County, Environmental Health is working closely with Emerging & Zoonotic Infectious Disease Section (EZID) of the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS). Traps will be set up in our county to perform surveillance activity for this mosquito.

Environmental Health staff will also be performing surveillance for the mosquitoes known to carry Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). These mosquitos (*Culiseta melanura* and *Coquitllettidia perturbans*) will be trapped, identified, and tested for EEE. Reporting on the findings will be shared with the community.

“Although continued response to COVID-19 remains a top priority for the health department, there is still critical public health work, such as mosquito surveillance, that must be done to protect the health and safety of our community this summer,” says Vern Johnson, Environmental Health Division Chief. “Trapping and testing this species of mosquito will offer early EEE surveillance and detection, ultimately helping citizens take steps to reduce disease transmission within Kalamazoo County.”

In addition, Environmental Health will be conducting several tick drags this summer. The purpose of these drags is to capture and identify blacklegged ticks (*Ixodes scapularis*) which are known to transmit Lyme disease. Surveillance and early detection will help the community take the necessary steps to reduce disease transmission within Kalamazoo County.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Breakdown of What Kalamazoo County Health Department is Doing:

- Setting traps with the purpose of identifying the collected mosquitoes.
- Trapping, collecting, identifying, and testing the mosquitos that can carry EEE.
- Trapping, collecting and identifying ticks.
- Reporting information to MDHHS.
- Providing ZIKA and EEE disease prevention education.
- Informing the community upon any important findings during our surveillance of any potential disease carrying vectors.

What You Can Do To Prevent Mosquito-Borne And Tick-Borne Diseases:

- Empty and wash all outdoor containers that collect water (small pools, feeding bowls, open rain collection barrels, buckets, birdbaths, etc.) at least once a week.
- Keep swimming pools properly treated to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds.
- Keep trash containers properly covered.
- Use and repair screens on your home windows.
- Wear tall socks, pants and long sleeves when outdoors, especially from dusk to dawn.
- Use insect repellent with DEET and registered by the EPA on skin and treat clothing with permethrin to repel biting insects. Always follow label directions.

For more information about mosquito and tick surveillance, visit www.kalcounty.com/hcs/eh or call 269-373-5210.

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