



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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NEWS RELEASE
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Health Department Continues to Emphasize Protective Measures Against EEE

Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department continues to emphasize that residents take personal precautions to prevent mosquito bites in order to protect themselves against Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

EEE is a rare, deadly mosquito-borne virus that is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. This particular mosquito species is most active from dusk until dawn (7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.). When possible, residents should avoid outdoor activities during this time. If outside during these hours, residents should apply insect repellents that contain the active ingredient DEET or other U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered products to exposed skin or clothing and always follow the manufacturer's direction for use.

Kalamazoo County is experiencing widespread human and animal activity of EEE with three human cases now confirmed in Kalamazoo County residents. One of the confirmed cases has died. Most who are infected with the virus that causes EEE do not become ill. However, persons below the age of 15 or above the age of 50 years have greater risk of developing a severe infection that has high potential for permanent brain damage or death.

Out of an abundance of caution, and in alignment with the guidance given by the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, Kalamazoo County Health & Community Service Department is recommending, when possible, that municipalities, schools, and community groups reschedule outside events that occur during dusk to dawn hours (7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) to an earlier time or relocate the outdoor event to an indoor space. These precautionary measures should continue until the first hard frost decreases the mosquito population in Kalamazoo County.

If rescheduling or relocating the activity is not possible, the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department is recommending the following actions be taken:

- Use EPA-registered insect repellents that include DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone and by wear shoes with socks, light-colored long pants and long-

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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sleeved shirts. Children under 2 months old should not use repellent but rather be covered in clothing that covers arms and legs; strollers and baby carriers should be covered with mosquito netting.

- Eliminate sources of standing water around your respective homes, institutions, and jurisdictions.
- Ensure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings.
- Use nets and/or fans over outdoor eating areas.
- Encourage the use of bed nets for those sleeping outdoors or in conditions with no window screens.
- Share these messages on your social media platforms to help increase awareness about preventative measures to take.

For more information regarding EEE, visit www.kalcounty.com/hcs, www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases, or www.cdc.gov/eee.

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Kalamazoo County Government
Health & Community Services Department

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