



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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NEWS RELEASE
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Kalamazoo County Conducting Mosquito Surveillance May Through September

KALAMAZOO, MI — This year from May through September the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department Environmental Health staff will be setting several mosquito traps throughout Kalamazoo County to capture and identify potential disease carrying mosquitoes. The data collected is reported to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and is used to inform future prevention and education measures.

“Mosquito surveillance is critical work that must be done in order to provide our citizens with information on steps they can take to reduce disease transmission this summer,” says Lucus Pols, Environmental Health Division Chief. Trapping and testing this species of mosquito will offer early EEE surveillance and detection, ultimately helping citizens take steps to protect themselves this summer.

Environmental Health will 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. Information from the findings will be shared with our community.

Southern Michigan is also 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 the Emerging & Zoonotic Infectious Disease Section (EZID) of the MDHHS. Traps will be set up in our county to perform surveillance activity for this mosquito.

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 testing will provide our community with the steps necessary to help reduce disease transmission within Kalamazoo County.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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How 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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