



HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT MEDIA RELEASE

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Kalamazoo County Releases 2024 Tick Surveillance Results

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department (HCS) has received 2024 test results from blacklegged ticks submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Of the 24 ticks collected last year, seven tested positive for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacteria that causes Lyme Disease. One tick tested positive for *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*, which causes anaplasmosis.

“Mosquito and tick activity continues well into fall, often until the first hard frost,” said Lucas Pols, Environmental Health Division Manager. “Maintaining awareness and following through with prevention of mosquito and tick bites is essential to reducing vector-borne disease, including using insect repellent with DEET and performing tick checks on yourself, children, and pets.”

Bacteria Detected	Disease	Positive Ticks
<i>Borrelia burgdorferi</i>	Lyme Disease	7
<i>Anaplasma phagocytophilum</i>	Anaplasmosis	1

About the Diseases

- **Lyme disease** is the most common vector-borne illness in the U.S. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a distinctive skin rash. If untreated, the infection can spread to the joints, heart, and nervous system.
- **Anaplasmosis** symptoms include fever, chills, headache, and muscle aches. If untreated, it can lead to severe complications such as bleeding, respiratory failure, and organ failure.

While tick exposure can happen any time of year, the risk is highest during the warmer months – typically April through September – when ticks are most active.

How to Protect Yourself from Mosquito and Tick-Borne Illnesses

- Empty and clean all outdoor containers that collect water (small pools, feeding bowls, open rain collection barrels, buckets, birdbaths, etc.) at least once a week.
- Maintain swimming pools properly to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds and cover trash bins.
- Repair or install window screens to keep mosquitoes out.
- Wear tall socks, pants, and long sleeves when outdoors, especially from dusk to dawn.
- Use EPA-registered insect repellent with DEET on skin and treat clothing with permethrin to repel biting insects. Always follow label directions.
- Check yourself, your family, and pets for ticks after spending time outside.

For more information about mosquito and tick surveillance, visit www.kalcounty.gov/285/Home-Environment or call 269-373-5210.

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