Date: August 20th, 2019

RE: Health Alert for Van Buren and Cass County Residents

Van Buren Cass District Health Department received notification from the DNR that a deer in Cass County has tested positive for EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis) the week of August 19, 2019. Please see the “link” to the Press Release from August 16, 2019 from Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) reporting on two cases of EEE confirmed in horses in Kalamazoo and St. Joseph counties.

Van Buren Cass District Health Department along with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is urging residents to stay healthy by following steps to avoid mosquito bites:

- Apply insect repellents that contain the active ingredient DEET, or other U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved product to exposed skin or clothing, and always follow the manufacturer’s directions for use.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors. Apply insect repellent to clothing to help prevent bites.
- Maintain window and door screenings to help keep mosquitoes outside.
- Empty water from mosquito breeding sites around the home, such as buckets, unused kiddie pools, old tires or similar sites where mosquitoes may lay eggs.
- Use nets and/or fans over outdoor eating areas.

People can be infected with EEE from the bite of a mosquito carrying the virus. The disease is not spread from animal to humans. Signs and symptoms of EEE include sudden onset of fever, chills, body and joint aches. EEE infection can develop into severe encephalitis, resulting in headache, disorientation, tremors, seizures and paralysis. Permanent brain damage, coma and death may also occur in some cases, per the press release from MDHHS, August 16, 2019. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, seek prompt medical attention.