



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Health Alert: Recent detection of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) & West Nile Virus**  
*Van Buren/Cass District Health Department Urges Community Vigilance and Prevention*

**Lawrence, MI-** Van Buren/Cass District Health Department (VBCDHD) is calling on residents to take precautionary measures after the recent identification of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV) in mosquitos and animals in Van Buren and Cass County. EEE and WNV are diseases spread by mosquitoes and have the potential to cause serious illness; leading to severe mental deterioration and/or death. These diseases are only spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. EEE and WNV are not spread person-to-person, person to animal, or animal to person. No positive human cases have been detected in the jurisdiction. This Health Alert follows the detection of EEE in two horses in Van Buren, one horse in Cass County and a detection of WNV in an animal in Cass County.

In response to recent surveillance activities, VBCDHD is enhancing public health communications and education to prevent infection of EEE and WNV. Dr. Larry Wile, Medical Director of VBCDHD, stressed the importance of prevention since there is no specific treatment for EEE or WNV; "Though the risk of contracting these diseases for residents is low, it is not zero. While EEE and WNV pose significant health risks, there are effective steps we can all take to reduce the chances of infection. By remaining vigilant and following these guidelines, our community can protect itself from this serious virus."

Protect against mosquito bites by;

**1. Using Insect Repellents and Protective Clothing**

- a. Use EPA-approved insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- b. Wear long sleeves and pants, especially during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- c. Consider avoiding or limiting outdoor activities between dusk and dawn.
- d. Ensure windows and doors are fitted with proper screens to keep mosquitoes out.

**2. Remove Standing Water**

- a. Regularly empty containers that collect water, such as flowerpots, birdbaths, and children's pools.
- b. Clean out gutters to prevent water accumulation.
- c. Frequently change water in pet dishes.

**3. Safeguard Livestock and Pets:**

- a. Vaccinate horses against EEE and WNV. Use protective measures like insect repellent. Consider stabling animals during peak mosquito activity.
- b. Limit pets' outdoor activities during dawn and dusk.
- c. Report dead birds to local authorities, as they may indicate the presence of EEE or WNV in the area.



Van Buren/Cass District  
Health Department

## PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

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Van Buren/Cass District Health Department is dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of all residents in Van Buren and Cass counties. Through education, prevention, and community partnerships, we work to create a healthier and safer environment for everyone.

For more detailed information on vector borne viruses, including additional prevention tips and current updates, please visit the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' emerging diseases [resource page](#). The Van Buren/Cass District Health Department is actively monitoring the situation and will provide further updates as necessary. For local health information and resources, please visit our [website](#)



# Preventing Mosquito Bites



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As vector-borne illnesses rise globally, it's more important than ever to protect ourselves from mosquito bites. Mosquitoes are not just a nuisance; they can carry diseases like malaria, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, West Nile Virus, dengue, and Zika virus. Taking these precautions can significantly reduce your risk of contracting these potentially serious diseases and help safeguard your health.

## 1 Use Insect Repellent

Use [EPA-registered insect repellents](#) with one of the following active ingredients. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

- Deet
- Picaridin
- Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE)—A plant-derived ingredient
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## 2 Wear Protective Clothing

- Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Wear clothing and gear treated with permethrin.

A medida que las enfermedades transmitidas por vectores aumentan a nivel mundial, es más importante que nunca protegernos de las picaduras de mosquitos. Los mosquitos no son solo una molestia; pueden transmitir enfermedades como la malaria, la encefalitis equina oriental, el virus del Nilo Occidental, el dengue y el virus Zika. Tomar estas precauciones puede reducir significativamente el riesgo de contraer estas enfermedades potencialmente graves y ayudar a proteger tu salud.

## 1 Use repelente de insectos

Use [repelentes de insectos registrados en la EPA](#) con uno de los siguientes ingredientes activos. Cuando se usan de acuerdo con las instrucciones, los repelentes de insectos registrados en la EPA son de eficacia y seguridad comprobada, incluso para las personas embarazadas y las que estén amamantando.

- DEET
- Picaridina
- Aceite de eucalipto de limón

## 3 Control Mosquitoes Indoors and Outdoors

- Use screens on windows and doors. Repair holes in screens to keep mosquitoes outdoors.
- Use air conditioning, if available.
- Stop mosquitoes from laying eggs in or near water.
  - Check for water-holding containers both indoors and outdoors.
  - **Once a week**, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpot saucers, or trash containers.

# Cómo prevenir las picaduras de mosquitos

## 2 Use ropa protectora

- Use camisas de manga larga y pantalones largos holgados.
- Use ropa y otros artículos tratados con permetrina.

## 3 Controle los mosquitos en espacios interiores y al aire libre

- Use mallas o telas metálicas en las puertas y ventanas. Si tienen agujeros, repárelos para evitar que entren mosquitos.
- Si hay aire acondicionado, úselo.
- Evite que los mosquitos pongan huevos en el agua o cerca del agua.
- Revise los contenedores con agua en espacios interiores y al aire libre.
- Una vez a la semana, hay que vaciar y restregar, voltear, cubrir o botar los recipientes que puedan acumular agua, como llantas, baldes, juguetes, piscinas, fuentes de aves, platillos de macetas o basureros.