

# The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

June 2019



During Lyme Disease Awareness Week (May 19-25, 2019), the Division of Public Health (DPH) presented tick bite prevention trail signs to the Town of Milton in Milton Memorial Park. From left: Milton Public Works Director Greg Wingo, Representative Steve Smyk, DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay, and Milton Mayor Ted Kanakos. DPH is providing the signs to all municipalities and parks while supplies last; call 302-744-4930.

## Avoid tick bites to prevent the ill health effects of Lyme disease

Lyme disease is frequently characterized by an expanding red rash, commonly referred to as a “bull’s eye rash.” Rashes can occur anywhere on the body and vary in size and shape. Other symptoms can include fever and or chills, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and headaches.

In 2018, DPH reported 520 confirmed and probable cases of Lyme disease. Blacklegged or deer tick bites transmit the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and *B. mayonii* which cause Lyme disease.

DPH recommends preventing tick bites by following the “BLAST” steps: **B**athe or shower within two hours of coming indoors; **L**ook for ticks on your body and remove them; **A**pply repellent to your body and clothes; **S**pray your yard; and **T**reat your pet with a veterinarian-approved medicine that kills ticks.

DPH is providing educational presentations to camps, schools, and other organizations. Call DPH at 1-888-295-5156. At [De.gov/lyme](http://De.gov/lyme), medical providers can access webinars with free Continuing Education Units, children can learn about Lyme disease on the “Kid’s Korner,” and adults can find detailed tick removal instructions and a printable poster of common symptoms. Parks and municipalities can receive free poly-vinyl tick bite prevention trail signs from DPH while supplies last; call 302-744-4930 to order.

## Prepare for dangerous summer heat

Extreme heat and high humidity can lead to life-threatening heat disorders. At risk are older adults, young children, urban residents, those with chronic health conditions, and those who are overweight. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the [Ready Campaign](#) provide these precautions:

- Limit exposure to the sun by staying indoors and avoiding strenuous work. When working outside in extreme heat, use a buddy system and take frequent breaks. Wear sunscreen, light-colored clothing, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles even with the air conditioning on.
- Drink plenty of water, even when not thirsty. Keep water for pets and livestock filled and fresh. Avoid drinks with caffeine; limit alcoholic beverages. Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals.
- Circulate air for cooling. Install window air conditioners snugly and insulate them.
- Weather-strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- Cover windows with drapes, shades, awnings, or louvers.
- Get trained in first aid to learn how to treat heat-related emergencies. Check on family, friends, and neighbors who do not have air conditioning and who spend much of their time alone.

Listen to local weather forecasts often. For critical National Weather Service updates, visit <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat>, [Ready.gov](#), or the Spanish-language website [Listo.gov](#), or listen to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio. If your home loses power during a heat wave, go to a designated public shelter. Text SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your area (example: shelter 12345) and listen to local officials.



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