

## It's Tick Season

Warmer temperatures mean an increase in tick activity. Ticks are most active between the months of April and September. They thrive along grassy shorelines, within wooded areas, and in the fields surrounding wooded areas. Typically, ticks feed on wildlife (e.g. squirrels and deer), but pets and humans can be bitten too. Once a tick finds a good host, it will attach and feed for several days until it becomes engorged or it is removed. Some, but not all ticks carry diseases which can be transmitted to humans. These diseases can be serious, or even fatal, if they are not diagnosed and treated properly. See the tips below to learn how to prevent a tick bite.

### **Avoid areas that are known to have a lot of ticks.**

Ticks like to live in moist, shady locations. They can be found in overgrown grassy and wooded areas; ticks can also be found in brush and leaf litter along the ground. When possible, avoid contact with these areas, use only well-groomed paths, and walk in the middle of trails.

### **Use physical and chemical barriers.**

You can deter ticks from attaching to you by wearing long sleeves and pants. The clothing will create a physical barrier between the ticks and your skin. Wearing light colored clothing can also make it easier to spot and brush away any ticks that may be crawling on you. Alternatively, insect repellents can act as a chemical barrier. When choosing a repellent, look for one containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Make sure you read the label of any insect repellent you intend to use and follow all directions.

### **Check your skin for ticks every day.**

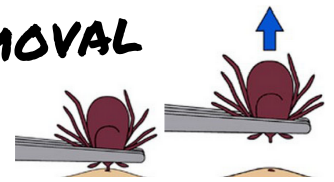
After being outdoors, promptly place clothing in the dryer on high heat for at least one hour to kill any live ticks. Immediately shower to wash away any stray ticks and use a mirror to carefully examine your body. Areas of the body where ticks are commonly found include armpit, groin, ankle, scalp, and behind the knee.

If you find a tick attached to yourself or others, promptly remove it. The early detection and removal of a tick can greatly reduce the risk of infection. Monitor the individual for signs of infection (e.g. chills, fever, headaches, muscle or joint pain, the appearance of a rash). If signs develop, contact your healthcare provider. For instructions on how to have an attached tick identified and/or tested for Lyme disease, call LCHD at 517-546-9850.

For more information about ticks in Michigan, including how to keep your home and yard tick-free, visit: [bit.ly/2iBERiQ](https://bit.ly/2iBERiQ)

## TICK REMOVAL

If you find a tick attached to yourself or a loved one, remove it using these easy steps.



- 1 Use fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool to grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. If tweezers are unavailable, you can use your fingernails and tissue paper.
- 2 Slowly, but firmly, pull the tick straight out.
- 3 Immediately wash the bite (and your hands) with soap and water and apply antiseptic to the bite.

# Spring Cleaning Checklist

Unclutter closets

Clean garage

Properly dispose of waste



Household hazardous wastes like batteries, paint, motor oil, electronics, needles, and medications should not be thrown in the trash. Keep our environment clean and your family healthy by following the recycling and disposal instructions on Livingston County's Household Hazardous Waste page: [bit.ly/2wDY6i5](http://bit.ly/2wDY6i5)

## Are you neglecting your septic system?

When you flush your toilet, your waste water needs to go somewhere. For some, that destination is a city owned and operated water treatment plant; for others, the wastewater travels to an onsite septic system. These onsite septic systems are the homeowner's responsibility to monitor and maintain. When was the last time you had your septic system inspected?

The average household septic system should be pumped every three to five years (depending on household and tank sizes). Keeping up with this routine maintenance now can save you from a costly (and smelly) system failure in the future.

### Signs of a septic system failure:

- Toilets back up; drains won't drain.
- Excessive moisture or waste water surfaces over the drainfield.
- Foul odors come from the drainfield or septic tank.

A failed sewage system is a health hazard to you, your family, and your neighbors. Call Livingston County Environmental Health at the first signs of failure, and we will assist you in your efforts to remedy the situation.

More info at: [bit.ly/2IbTroZ](http://bit.ly/2IbTroZ)



### LIVINGSTON COUNTY Health Department

2300 East Grand River Avenue, Suite 102  
Howell, MI 48843-7578

**Personal & Preventive Health Services**  
517-546-9850

**Environmental Health Services**  
517-546-9858

[www.LCHD.org](http://www.LCHD.org)

## VAPOR INTRUSION: WHAT IS IT?

Vapor intrusion occurs when vapor-forming chemicals are spilled, dumped, or leaked into the environment without being properly cleaned up. Those chemicals then pollute the soil, groundwater, sewers, and drainlines surrounding homes and buildings. Although these chemicals are typically released in liquid form, they can very easily evaporate and become a gas/vapor that you cannot see or smell. Once these chemicals are in vapor form, they can seep through the soil and into buildings through foundation cracks or other entry points. If these vapors are allowed to collect inside homes or buildings, the risk of explosion and/or acute health effects increases.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) monitors spill and contamination sites for signs of vapor intrusion and may collect air quality samples from homes or businesses they believe are at risk. If a vapor intrusion problem is detected within your home, there are simple steps that can be taken to keep you and your family safe. For example, piping and fans can be installed in the lowest level of your home to vent the chemical vapors; this solution is referred to as a 'vapor mitigation system.'

In Livingston County, there are two ongoing site investigations: Holly Road Site and Haigh Manufacturing Site. More information about these contamination sites can be found on our website: [bit.ly/2ICJMfz](http://bit.ly/2ICJMfz)

**Source:** Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. (2018). Vapor Intrusion. Retrieved from [www.michigan.gov/vaporintrusion](http://www.michigan.gov/vaporintrusion)