



# BERRIEN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## **Statement from the Berrien County Health Department Re: Eastern Equine Encephalitis for Schools to Use in Communication with Stakeholders**

At this time, the Berrien County Health Department is not recommending that schools cancel evening events, such as sporting events or practices, or limit daytime outdoor activities like recess. However, the Health Department is recommending the following actions be taken:

- Encourage the use of an EPA-registered insect repellent for teams/groups that practice or perform outdoors in the late afternoon or evening.
- Consider avoiding field trips to heavily wooded or swampy areas to reduce potential exposure to mosquitos.
- Perform walk-throughs of your properties to remove any standing water to reduce potential mosquito breeding ground sites.
- Consider contacting a local pest control company regarding concentrated mosquito spraying options in areas of concern.

The Health Department also encourages families to take the following personal protective actions to prevent mosquito bites:

- When outdoors, apply insect repellents that contain the active ingredient DEET, or other EPA-registered 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 screening 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.

It is important to remember that while serious, the risk of contracting EEE is very low. As we head into the season where the risk of contracting the flu is much higher, the Health Department continues to urge that families get a flu vaccination for everyone in their household who is 6 months or older.

More information regarding EEE can be found at [www.bchdmi.org](http://www.bchdmi.org) or [www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases](http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases).