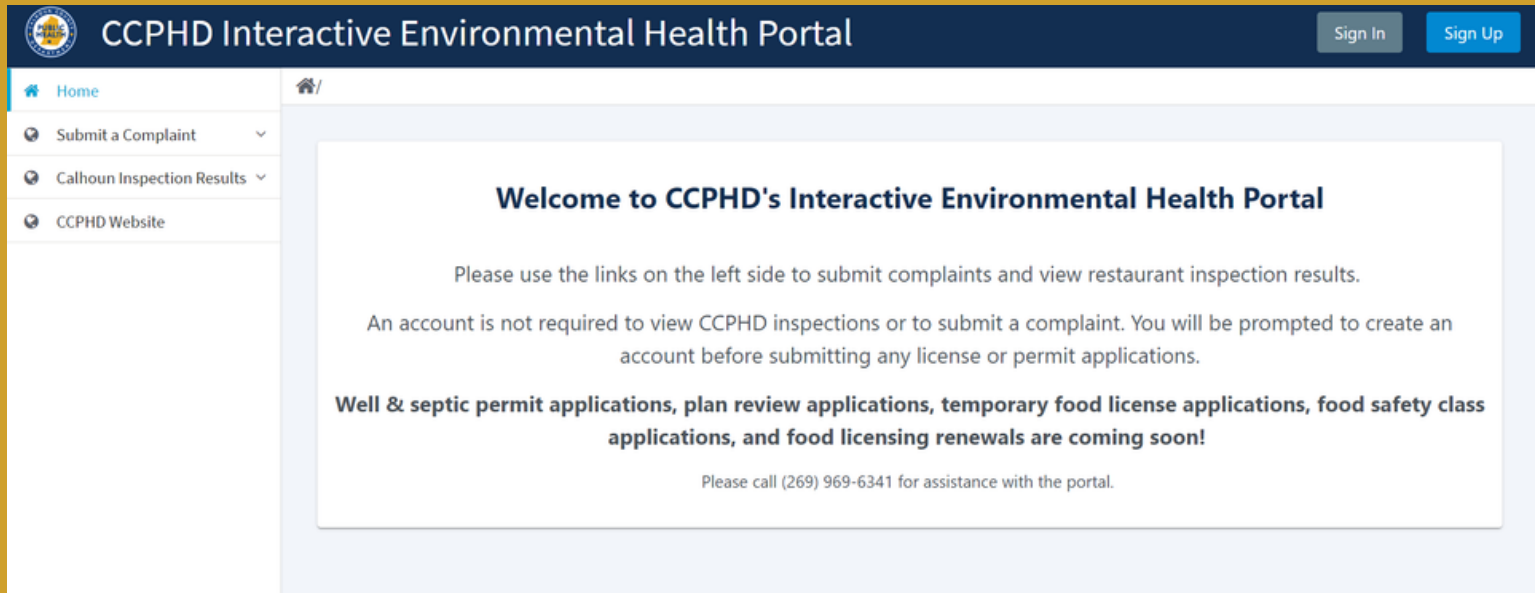


APRIL-JUNE 2023

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH NEWSLETTER

The Quarterly Newsletter for Calhoun County Environmental Public Health



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HEDGEHOG PORTAL IMPLEMENTED

CCPHD is excited to roll out the first phase of the new Interactive Environmental Health Portal! This first phase will provide access to food safety inspections conducted at licensed food service facilities throughout the county and allow the public to submit complaints. Food safety, sewage, and general complaints can be submitted through the portal for investigation. Foodborne illness complaints must still be called into the Environmental Health front desk for investigation.

The inspection results page allows you to search by food service facility and obtain copies of the inspections. Searches can be conducted by name or address, or using a map and selecting the facility.

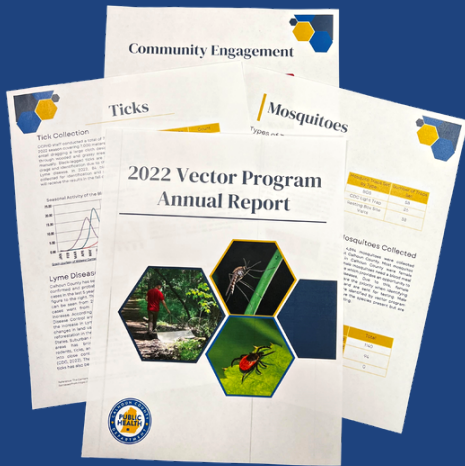
Complaints submitted to CCPHD will be investigated or referred to the proper jurisdiction for the complaint. CCPHD staff will reach out to you if additional information is requested during an investigation but will not share your information during investigations. Due to this, anonymous complaints are not accepted and submitter information is kept private.

Additional features will be added to the portal that will allow for the public to submit applications for well and septic permits, restaurant licenses, and restaurant plan reviews. The public will be able to create an account within the portal to track applications, make payments, and communicate directly about their request.

Check out the portal [here](#) and stay tuned for additional features!



2022 Vector Program Annual Report is Available!



The report is available on CCPHD's website and Facebook.

TICK AND MOSQUITO SEASON

Warmer weather is on the way! As we enjoy more time outdoors, take steps to reduce your exposure to ticks and mosquitoes this spring. As the snow melts, it can accumulate into areas of standing water where mosquitoes can breed and hatch. Empty or cover items where water can collect or use mosquito larvicide dunks in certain areas of standing water. CCPHD's Environmental Public Health Department has mosquito larvicide dunks available for free again this year! When spending time in grassy areas or walking trails, be sure to conduct tick checks on yourself and others. Ticks in the nymph life-stage are active in the early spring months and can be small, about the size of a poppy seed, making them more difficult to see. CCPHD's vector program has tick-bite prevention bags available for free that include tick removal tools, identification cards, and resources.

To pick up mosquito larvicide dunks or a tick-bite prevention bag, stop into CCPHD's Battle Creek or Albion locations during business hours!

Mosquito Dunks are available free again this year!



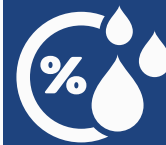
PREVENTING MOLD GROWTH INSIDE

Molds are very common in buildings and homes. Mold tends to grow in places where there is moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, or pipes. The key to preventing mold growth is to identify and control moisture and water problems. Testing for mold is typically not recommended because there are no set standards for what is and isn't an acceptable amount of mold in a home; if you can see or smell mold, it is present and should be addressed. Spring and summer months can increase moisture due to humidity. Using an air conditioner or dehumidifier can help keep the humidity level low inside the home. Kitchens and bathrooms are common areas where there is increased moisture from cooking and showering. Installing exhaust fans in these areas that vent outdoors can help reduce moisture.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) provides a hotline for mold questions at 517-335-9436.

For more information about mold and cleaning recommendations, visit the MDHHS webpage [here](#). For information about mold in rental units and disputes, visit the MDHHS document [here](#).

You can control mold growth by:



Controlling humidity levels;

Promptly fixing leaky roofs, windows, and pipes;



Ventilating shower, laundry, and cooking areas;

Thoroughly cleaning and drying after flooding, leaks, or condensation.



Ways to reduce bed bug risk when thrifting

Do:

- Search for signs of bed bugs on furniture
- Clean furniture when bringing it home
- Heat treat items in the dryer immediately
- Ask the seller or stores about their sanitation and bed bug inspection policies and procedures

Do Not:

- Bring home items without inspecting them first
- Assume the seller or store had sanitized or inspected for bed bugs

DON'T LET THE BEDBUGS BITE

Spring and summer weather allows for yard sales and the potential to find unique items to add to your home! When you look at second-hand items make sure to check them over to reduce the potential of bringing home unwanted hitchhikers: bed bugs. Certain items have the potential to provide hiding spots for bed bugs, such as clothing, mattresses, and upholstered furniture. Tiny holes, cracks, and upholstery seams provide hiding places and can be difficult to see. Preventing bed bugs is easier than treating for them! Carefully check and clean items before bringing them inside your home. Clothing can be placed into the dryer and furniture can be cleaned with soapy water or cleaning products. Learning how to identify bed bugs and where to look for them can help you avoid bringing them into your home.



For more information about identifying, treating, and preventing bed bugs, visit the MDHHS Michigan Manual for the Prevention and Control of Bed Bugs [here](#).

STORM SAFETY

Storms have the potential to produce strong winds, lightning, tornadoes, hail, and flooding. This can cause power outages, health hazards, and disrupt normal day-to-day functions. Develop an action plan and have supplies in place before a storm hits to help protect your family and pets before, during, and after. The State of Michigan provides information on creating an emergency action plan, plan templates, and emergency checklists for basic supplies, pets, and older adults. A mobile app was created where plans, checklists, and important contacts can all be stored in one place and shared with family members.

For more information about preparing and creating a plan, downloading templates, and the mobile app, visit the State of Michigan's webpage [here](#).



Michigan Prepares Emergency Plan mobile app features:



Import contacts directly into a plan so you and your family have access to important phone numbers;



Select emergency meeting spots so everyone knows how to find each other;



Send PDFs of your completed plans to yourself and family members. Plans can be printed and stored in a safe place;



Access resources such as basic supply checklists, fact sheets, and links to stay informed.

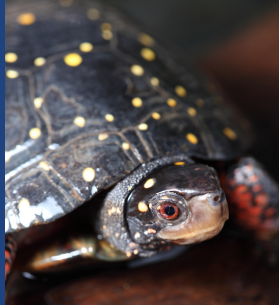
Species found in vernal pools



Fairy Shrimp
Photo courtesy of Vernal Pool Patrol



Spotted Salamander
Photo courtesy of Canva



Spotted Turtle
Photo courtesy of Canva



Dragonflies
Photo courtesy of Canva

VERNAL POOLS

In the spring and fall months small, shallow pools of water can appear that are called vernal pools. Vernal pools occur in forested areas throughout Michigan. These pools provide a fishless habitat that are necessary for the survival and reproduction of several invertebrates, amphibians, and plant species. Vernal pools are vulnerable to several threats and are not well-protected under current wetland laws and regulations. Several groups across the state work to increase awareness, understanding, and protection of vernal pools. These groups have events and provide opportunities to get involved!

For more information about vernal pools or opportunities to get involved, visit the Michigan Vernal Pools Partnership webpage [here](#).



Vernal Pool

Photo courtesy of Canva

PREVENTING ANIMAL BITES

Wildlife and animals become more active in the warmer months. When enjoying the outdoors or conducting spring cleaning around the outside of your home, take precautions when encountering wildlife. Rabies is a viral disease that all mammals can contract when bitten or scratched by an infected animal. In Michigan, most rabies cases come from wildlife with bats being most common. Avoid touching or interacting with wildlife, but if scratched or bit by an animal contact your primary care provider to discuss whether post-exposure prophylaxis should be administered. If the animal is available for rabies testing, contact CCPHD for instructions and schedule a time to bring in the deceased animal for testing. Keeping your pets up to date on rabies vaccinations can reduce the risk of rabies if they encounter wildlife.

For more information about rabies, prevention, and annual data of rabies testing, visit the State of Michigan's webpage [here](#).

Common Carriers of Rabies

All mammals can get rabies and have the potential to spread it. In 2017, 91% of rabies cases were diagnosed in wild animals and only 9% in domestic animals. In Michigan, most cases come from wildlife and the species most common to contract rabies are bats.



Bats accounted for 78% to 100% of rabies cases in the state during the period of 2007 to 2017.



Skunks and red foxes were the next most likely species to contract rabies with cases reported in 1986, 1989, and 1997.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Ryan Tetrault is a Sanitarian II and has been with CCPHD for 35 years. Ryan has been involved in various programs including restaurant plan reviews, licensed food facility inspections, septic and well permitting, public water supply, campground inspections, and pool inspections. In the early 1990s, Ryan worked closely with IT to modernize the department



and set up the desktop computer system. During the Enbridge oil spill in 2010, Ryan was part of the response team involved in GPS mapping all of the wells in the contamination area. He enjoys working in public health because of the opportunities that it provides meeting new people and that each day is different. Currently, Ryan works with facilities that have public water supplies and conducts campground and pool inspections. In these fields, he enjoys building relationships with the owners and educating them on the importance of maintaining clean drinking water to the public that come to stay and visit.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Food Safety and Certified Food Manager Classes

Classes are scheduled for the following dates:

April 18th
March 16th
June 20th
July 18th

Call the Environmental Public Health Department to reserve a spot in the class.



CALHOUN COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

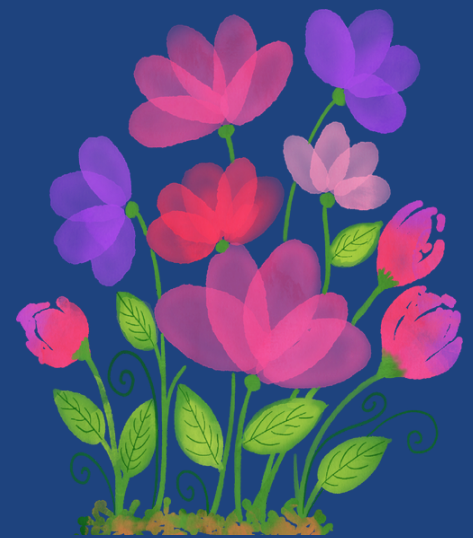
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"Working to enhance our community's total well-being"

