



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, from 2004-2018, vector-borne diseases in humans have more than doubled in the U.S. and while Lyme disease accounts for 82% of all reported tickborne diseases, spotted fevers, babesiosis and anaplasmosis/ehrlichiosis have become increasingly prevalent; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease is the most commonly reported vector-borne disease in the U.S. caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and is transmitted by the common blacklegged tick found primarily in the Northeast and upper Midwest regions of the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, approximately 476,000 Americans are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease each year with 95% of confirmed Lyme disease cases in 2015 reported from 14 states, including New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, there were 4,000 reported Lyme disease cases in New Jersey, which was the second highest number of cases reported in the nation. Lyme disease is an under-reported illness, and therefore the actual number of people with Lyme disease in New Jersey is likely much higher; and

WHEREAS, ticks that carry Lyme disease can also carry several other pathogens, many of which are reported in New Jersey, and occasional co-infections have been reported; and

WHEREAS, while the risk of contracting a tick-borne disease can be year-round, the nymphal ticks, which are the size of a poppy seed, are most active in the spring and summer months;

WHEREAS, tick-borne diseases are diagnosed based on symptoms, physical findings and the possibility of exposure to infected ticks;

WHEREAS, while most tick-borne diseases can be treated successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics and by taking steps to prevent tick bites can help prevent tick-borne diseases, including using insect repellent, removing ticks promptly, applying pesticides and reducing tick habitat, every community has the responsibility to educate the public about the symptoms, to seek prompt treatment and how to prevent tick-borne diseases; and

WHEREAS, the NJ Department of Health coordinates various tick-borne disease activities including surveillance, education and outreach initiatives, and works to advance workforce development and training to sustain and strengthen tick-borne disease public health practices; enhance tick-borne disease surveillance capacity; and perform and evaluate educational outreach to healthcare providers, public health partners, policy makers and the public;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MAY 2021

AS

TICK-BORNE DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey and encourage all community members to help spread tick-borne disease awareness and prevention education.



GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-second day of April in the year two thousand twenty-one, the two hundred forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States.

Richard J. Oliver
Lt. GOVERNOR

Philip D. Murphy
GOVERNOR