

Beat the Bite Campaign

NYSACHO 2025 Climate and Health Adaptation

Monroe County Department of Public Health
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About Monroe County

❑ Location

Monroe County is located in western New York State, within the Finger Lakes region.

❑ Total Population

As of 2022, the population was 752,035, according to Census Bureau estimates.

❑ Demographics

- Population under 5 years of age: 5.2%
- Population 65 years and older: 19.3%
- With disability, < 65 years of age: 11.1%
- Communities of color: ~34.2%
- Low-income individuals: 13.2%
- Individuals with Limited English Proficiency: 12.7%



Warming Temperatures, Rising Vector Threats



Temperature Trends in Monroe County

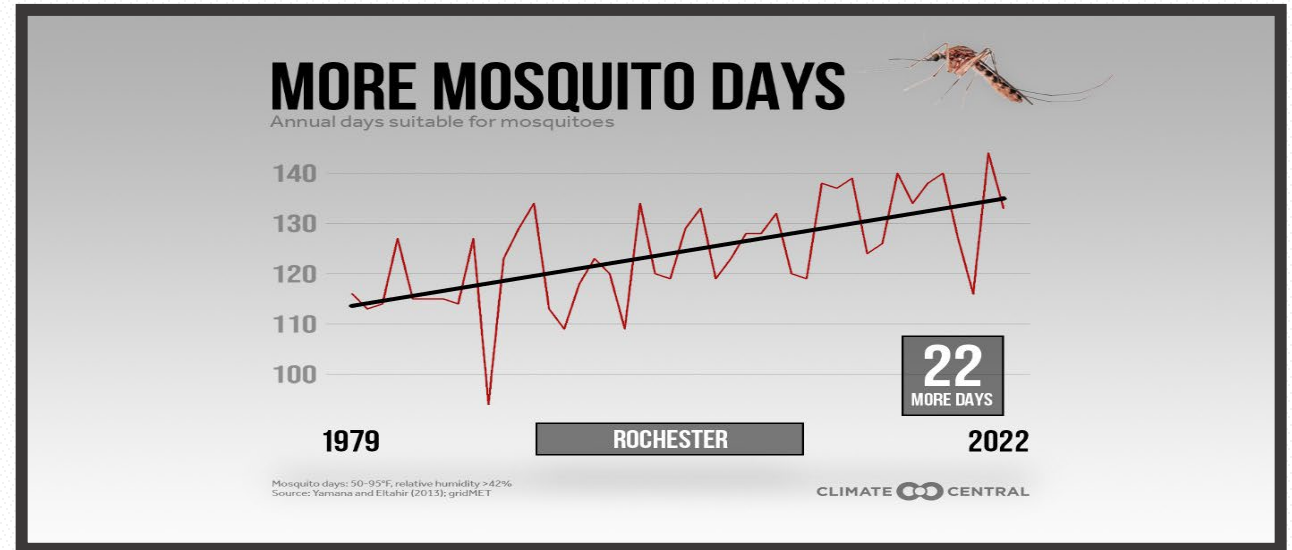
- The average temperature rose from **49.3°F (Sept 2018)** to **51.6°F (Aug 2024)**.
- The **lowest average** was 47.4°F (Sept 2019); the **highest** was 51.6°F (Aug 2024).



More Mosquito Days, More Risk

• In **Monroe County**, mosquito days have increased:

- **1972:** 114 days
- **2022:** 136 days (+22 days)



Community Concern: Mosquito Awareness Gap

- A fatal case of **Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)** in a horse nearby, Ontario County, sparked widespread concern.
- Residents expressed fear about **locally acquired mosquito-borne diseases**.

⚠️ Identified Gap in Public Health Response

- The incident exposed a **lack of accessible educational materials** on mosquito-borne disease prevention.



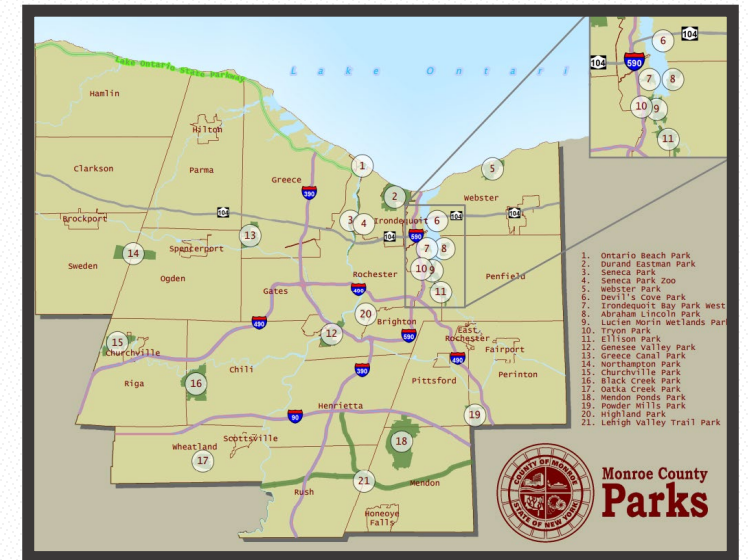
Project Overview: Beat the Bite

Goal: To educate Monroe County residents and visitors about the increasing risk of mosquito and tick-borne diseases due to climate change, and to promote prevention strategies that reduce exposure and support community health resilience.

- Duration: May to mid-September (peak mosquito and tick season)
- Target Audience: All residents and tourists, with a focus on non English speakers.
- Location: Monroe County and Town Parks
- Partners: The Department of Epidemiology and Disease Control Division

Monroe County Parks Department

31 municipalities within Monroe County



Project Implementation

- **Educational Signage**

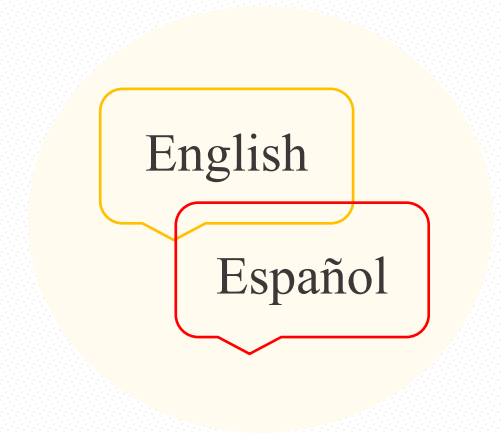
- Laminated signs placed in ~150 parks Located at entrances and trailheads
- Clear prevention tips for residents and tourists

- **Community Engagement**

- Distribute **prevention kits** (brochures, mosquito wipes, tick kits)
- Gather **feedback** on climate-health concerns at community events

- **Digital Outreach**

- County social media campaign and updates on website
- Share prevention tips, event information, gather feedback.



Laminated Signs for Parks

Be Aware! Protect Yourself from Mosquitoes and Ticks



Use EPA-registered bug spray whenever you're outside

Reduce exposed skin by wearing long-sleeves, pants, socks and closed-toed shoes



Stay on park trails - Pests like to hide in tall grass

Examine body, clothing, gear, children and pets for ticks when you go inside



Scan the QR code to learn more about mosquito and tick bite prevention



Ticks and mosquitoes can spread diseases that make you sick, such as Lyme disease, Eastern Equine Encephalitis or West Nile Virus. Beat the Bite! by taking steps to prevent mosquito and tick bites:

- Ticks live in grassy, brushy or wooded areas. Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter. Walk in the center of trails to avoid contact with ticks.
- Use an insect repellent with DEET or permethrin whenever you're outdoors. Follow instructions on the product label.
- Wear long pants, long sleeves and socks when you're outdoors to reduce exposed skin.
- Remove standing water around the house to prevent mosquitoes from breeding.
- After spending time outdoors in areas where ticks live, bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors and check your full body for ticks using a hand-held or full-length mirror.
- Be sure to check between your toes, the back of your knees, groin, armpits and neck, along the hairline, inside the belly button and behind your ears. Check children and pets too, if they were outside.
- If you can, pre-treat your clothing and gear such as boots, pants, socks and tents with products containing 0.5% permethrin. It remains protective through several washings.

Using insect repellent

- Always follow the product label directions.
- Reapply insect repellent as directed.
- Do not spray repellent on your skin underneath your clothing.
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and repellent second.
- Always use an EPA-registered insect repellent. The effectiveness of non-EPA registered repellents and some natural repellents is unknown.
- If you are pregnant and have concerns, contact your healthcare provider before using insect repellent.



Using insect repellent on children

- Always follow the product label directions.
- DO NOT use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old.
- DO NOT use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD).
- Adults: Spray insect repellent onto your hands and then apply to a child's face.
- DO NOT put insect repellent on a child's hands, eyes, mouth or cut or irritated skin.

West Nile Virus

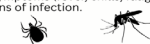
- West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease that can cause mild to severe illness in humans, birds and some other animals.
- There are no vaccines to prevent or medicines to treat West Nile virus in people. Fortunately, most people infected with WNV don't feel sick, although some may experience mild flu-like symptoms.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis

- Also known as EEE, Eastern Equine Encephalitis is caused by a virus spread to people and horses by the bite of an infected mosquito.
- Human cases of EEE are rare, but the virus can cause serious illness, or even death.
- There are no vaccines to prevent EEE or specific treatments for EEE disease. Reduce risk by preventing mosquito bites.

Lyme Disease

- Lyme disease is caused by bacteria that are spread by tiny, infected black-legged (deer) ticks. Both people and animals can have Lyme disease.
- It is characterized by a distinctive, "bullseye" rash and flu-like symptoms, but can also cause joint pain, heart problems and neurological issues if left untreated.
- It is spread by the bite of an infected tick. The tick usually must be attached to a person for at least 36 to 48 hours before they transmit Lyme disease bacteria, so it's really important to check for ticks after spending time outdoors.
- If you've been bitten by a tick, contact your healthcare provider if you develop a rash, especially one with a bull's-eye appearance, flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, fatigue) or other signs of infection.



Additional resources

To learn more about insect repellents, visit [epa.gov/insect-repellents](https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents) or scan the QR code



To learn more about mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases, visit [health.ny.gov/diseases/mosquitoes/](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/mosquitoes/) or scan the QR code



To learn more about ticks and preventing Lyme disease, visit [health.ny.gov/publications/2825/](https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2825/) or scan the QR code



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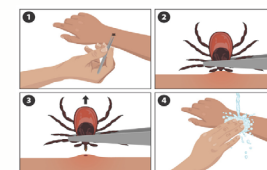
ADAM J. BELLO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



Department of Health

What should I do if I find a tick on myself, my child or my pet?

- Immediately remove the tick with tweezers, clean the bite site and watch for signs of an infection.
- Using fine-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick firmly at its head or mouth, as close to the skin's surface as you can.
- Pull firmly and steadily until the tick lets go of the skin. Do not twist the tick or rock it from side to side.
- Dispose of the tick by taking one of these steps: place it in a sealed container; wrap it in tape; flush it down the toilet; or put it in rubbing alcohol. DO NOT crush the tick with your fingers.
- Wash your hands and the site of the bite with soap and water.
- Swab the bite site with alcohol to disinfect the skin.
- Watch for signs of infection, including a "bull's-eye" rash or flu-like symptoms and contact your healthcare provider if you have any concerns.



**Preventive Tips
against Ticks and
Mosquitoes**



Protect Yourself From
Mosquitoes
and Ticks!

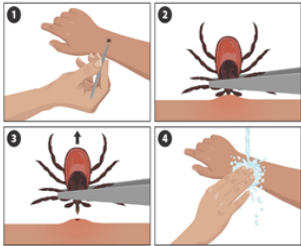


Brochures

Check yourself, your children and your pets for ticks as soon as you come inside



If you find a tick attached to your skin, remove it promptly using fine-tipped tweezers.



If you were bitten by a tick, call your doctor if you see a rash or feel like you have the flu.

Additional Resources



To learn more about insect repellents, visit epa.gov/insect-repellents or scan the QR code



To learn more about mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases, visit health.ny.gov/diseases/mosquitoes/ or scan the QR code



To learn more about ticks and preventing Lyme disease, visit health.ny.gov/publications/2825/ or scan the QR code



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Protect Yourself From Mosquitoes and Ticks!



Mosquitoes and ticks can spread diseases, including West Nile virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and Lyme disease that make you and your family sick. Beat the Bite! by taking steps to prevent mosquito and tick bites.



Protect Yourself From Mosquitoes and Ticks



Use an EPA-approved bug spray whenever you're outdoors.

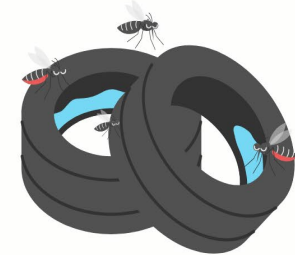
Wear long sleeves, long pants, socks and closed-toe shoes to reduce exposed skin outdoors.



Fix window screens early in the season to keep mosquitoes outside.

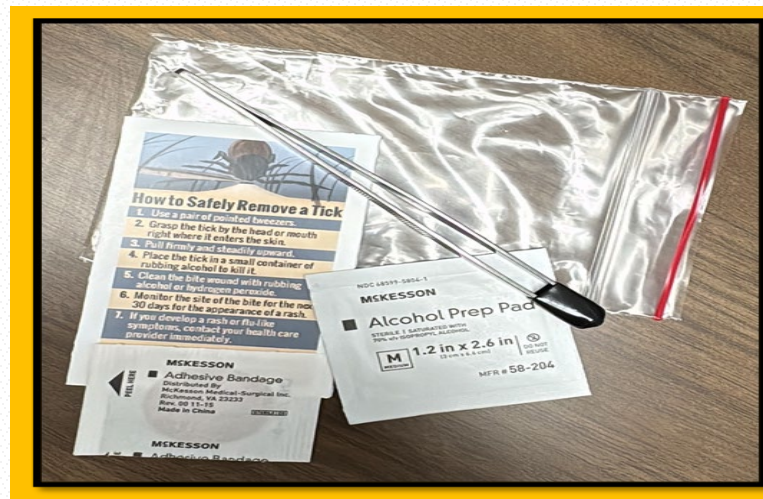


Remove standing water around your yard to prevent mosquitoes from breeding





Signage and Kits



Accomplishments

- **New and strengthened partnerships.**
- **Greater awareness of tick and mosquito-borne disease risks and prevention.**
- **Educational signage remains up beyond project funding.**
- **Bilingual materials increase access to underserved populations.**
- **Feedback to improve other climate related concerns.**

Future Plans

- **Continue distributing Tick and Mosquito kits throughout the summer at community events and during outreach opportunities**
- **Report Back on Community Feedback Results**



Thank You

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