



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LANSING

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Asian tiger mosquitoes identified in Wayne County

Insect can transmit viruses such as dengue, chikungunya and Zika

LANSING, Mich. – The invasive Asian tiger mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*, has again been identified in Wayne County, officials from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Wayne County Health Department announced today. The Asian tiger mosquito was discovered in Michigan for the first time in 2017, in an industrial area of Livonia in Wayne County. In 2018, the mosquitoes were again found in Wayne County, in an industrial area of Romulus. This time, the mosquito was discovered in an industrial area in Taylor.

Aedes albopictus, along with *Aedes aegypti* (the yellow fever mosquito), can transmit viruses such as dengue, chikungunya and Zika to people. These mosquitoes are widespread from tropical to temperate regions of the globe, including many parts of the U.S. They do not occur naturally in Michigan, where winters are usually too harsh for them to survive. However, warming climate trends are supporting the spread of these mosquitoes into more northern regions.

“Although we have not had any illnesses associated with these species of mosquitoes in Michigan, it is important to take precautions since other mosquitoes can spread viruses such as West Nile and Eastern Equine Encephalitis to people,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, MDHHS chief medical executive and chief deputy director for health. “We urge Michiganders to take precautions such as using an EPA-registered insect repellent when outdoors.”

The Asian tiger mosquito can live in areas with climates that range from tropical to temperate, and it has been extending its known range in the U.S. They are considered established in many midwestern states including Ohio, Illinois and Indiana. Occasionally, the mosquitoes will travel in commercial products shipped from states where they are currently established. This is likely how the mosquitoes have shown up in Wayne County.

This summer, MDHHS has again partnered with local health departments in Wayne and 23 other counties in Michigan to conduct surveillance for the two mosquito species that can carry Zika and other tropical viruses. These invasive day-biting mosquitoes breed in containers where water collects, such as old tires, gutters and flowerpots. Continued surveillance to date suggests that breeding populations have not survived the winter in our state.

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Industries that import into Michigan items that can hold water and serve as breeding sites for mosquitoes should consider taking precautions to kill mosquito larvae that may be present in these products.

Michigan residents can protect themselves from mosquito bites by:

- Eliminating sources of standing water such as wading pools, old tires, buckets and containers by dumping water to prevent mosquito eggs from hatching or larvae from developing into biting adults.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks when outdoors.
- Applying an EPA-registered insect repellent according to label instructions.
- Making sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens.

For more information about mosquito-borne viruses and mosquito surveillance in Michigan, visit [Michigan.gov/emergingdiseases](https://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases).

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