



Frank Lasee

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

FIRST SENATE DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Senator Frank Lasee

Phone: (608) 266-3512

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Higher Temperatures Increase Tick Activity *May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month*

MADISON – Spring brings warmer temperatures, new flowers, and ticks, and with ticks, Lyme disease. In 2014, a University of Wisconsin professor of entomology searched the University of Wisconsin Arboretum for immature infected deer ticks and found 32. In 2016, the professor searched the same exact area and found 592 immature infected deer ticks. As the statistics bear out, it's a growing problem.

The experts recommend that you avoid areas with ticks, wear white or light color clothes to better spot the little disease carriers, tuck your socks into your shoes, and wear repellent with DEET. Not getting bit in the first place is the best thing you can do to protect you and your family members.

A person or pet can get bit by a tick and not even know it. Tick bites start out very small, almost the size of the head of a pencil. Lyme disease often first presents itself as a rough circular reddish rash around or near the site of the tick bite. As the rash expands, other symptoms can start to develop: fever, headache, fatigue, stiff neck, muscle discomfort, and joint pain. Prompt and early detection of Lyme disease is incredibly important and can be treated with oral antibiotics, injectable antibiotics, and/or antimicrobials. The longer the disease is allowed to remain in a person's body, the more devastating the effects.

Wisconsin is a hotbed for Lyme disease and it's only going to get worse without increased awareness and proactive steps to prevent this devastating disease. The importance of tick avoidance and personal protection, tick detection and removal, the signs and symptoms of tick-borne illnesses, and the need for prompt diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease is a must for everyone living in Wisconsin.

This past Tuesday, May 2nd, a resolution that I co-authored proclaiming May as Lyme Disease Awareness Month passed unanimously in the legislature. Please help spread the word, be cognizant of those dirty little buggers, and go enjoy a beautiful Wisconsin spring!

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