

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ACTION ITEM
BOARD MEMBER INITIATIVE**

SUBJECT: Loudoun Lyme Disease Prevention and Awareness

ELECTION DISTRICT: Countywide

CRITICAL ACTION DATE: March 20, 2012

STAFF CONTACT: Juanita Tool, Staff Aide to Vice Chairman Clarke

RECOMMENDATIONS: Vice Chairman Clarke, Supervisor Reid and Supervisor Higgins recommend Board approval of this item

BACKGROUND:

Lyme disease is a serious health care endemic in Loudoun County. Lyme is a tick-borne illness caused by an infection of the *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacteria transmitted through tick bites. In 2011, there were 261 reported cases of Lyme in Loudoun County. In 2010, 223 cases were reported, representing approximately 18% of the cases reported in Virginia that year. Despite mandatory reporting of Lyme disease cases to the Virginia Department of Health, experts say that Lyme is underreported because of the vast array of symptoms that lead to misdiagnosis and the fact that doctors forget to report Lyme cases to the state.

Loudoun County is at the epicenter of this health care endemic. Not only do ticks transmit Lyme Disease but they also transmit a long list of co-infections such as Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, Tick Paralysis, Tick-borne Relapsing Fever, Tularemia, and many others. Many individuals and families in Loudoun are suffering from the effects of this devastating disease.

DISCUSSION:

After months of gathering information and speaking with Lyme experts, staff, and citizens, Vice Chairman Clarke, Supervisor Higgins, and Supervisor Reid are putting forth a Resolution and Proclamation Recognizing 2012 as Lyme Disease Awareness Year as well as a 10 Point Action Plan to Mitigate Lyme Disease in Loudoun County in an effort to bring this health crisis to the forefront. The plan is as follows:

- 1) Create a Lyme Disease Commission, appointed by the Board of Supervisors and made up of Loudoun citizens and health care professionals with an acute interest and expertise in Lyme disease prevention and education. This group will be charged with implementing the 10 Point Plan with the assistance of county staff as well as enlisting the help of citizens and organizations whose focus is already on Lyme disease.

- 2) Create a Lyme survey, as a follow up to the *2006 Lyme Disease in Loudoun County* survey, to determine the current key risk factors for contracting Lyme disease as well as any other relevant statistics that will enable a better determination of where work and funding should be directed.
- 3) Add a high-profile link to the front page of the Loudoun County website that will direct viewers to the County's web page which contains comprehensive information on Lyme disease prevention and treatment.
- 4) Develop a set of educational materials targeting different age groups, including elementary schools. Work with Loudoun County Public Schools to provide students with educational materials that can be disbursed through their health classes as well as consider sending out information on Lyme in children's backpacks, as has previously been done. Suggest having a contest for school-aged children to create a tag-line (for example, "It's Time to Know about Lyme") and a logo for this effort.
- 5) Organize a series of Lyme Education Forums within the County that include a panel of experts that can field questions from the public regarding Lyme, provide educational materials to the public as well as help facilitate the formation of Lyme Support groups in underserved geographic areas of the county.
- 6) Work with the local newspapers to place a series of monthly articles concerning Lyme once a month for the first year, with quarterly articles thereafter. These articles would keep the public up-to-date with advances in prevention and treatment, inform citizens of new resources that are available to them, as well as publish a spraying schedule for public parks.
- 7) Establish a list of doctors that specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease and provide this information on the County's Lyme webpage in addition to any new educational materials.
- 8) Develop information for homeowners on the costs and benefits of spraying their yards for ticks.
- 9) Provide a Lyme education awareness briefing to all children enrolled in Parks and Rec outdoor programs. There are approximately 10,000 children enrolled in these outdoor recreation camps.
- 10) Study the cost and feasibility of implementing two types of insecticide applications that will immediately begin to mitigate the spread of Lyme disease in Loudoun: spraying county-owned properties and licensing and placement of 4-poster deer feeders on private and/or public property. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states that broadcast spraying of areas of concern once a year, reduces the tick population by 65%.
 - a. Spraying County-Owned Property: In addition to studying the cost and feasibility of spraying county-owned properties, immediately begin a pilot program that targets six western parks that have been identified and selected based upon their small to moderate sizes, geographic locations, and logistical ease of spraying. The suggested parks are:

Franklin Park
Lucketts Community Park
Mickie Gordon Memorial Park
Nell Boone Park
Philip Bolen Memorial Park
Woodgrove Park

- b. Four Poster Deer Feeders: Work with the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) to study the feasibility of developing a county pilot program for the issuance of permits for the application of acaricides to deer via four-poster devices for the purpose of controlling the tick population and reducing the spread of tick-borne Lyme disease. This program has already been initiated by the Executive Director of DGIF as a follow-up from legislation introduced during the General Assembly session. The program should explore the cost, feasibility, and safety of placing four-post feeders on rural county owned property in addition to assisting private citizens in obtaining and legally gaining permits to safely locate them on their own property. The '4-Poster' device is specifically designed to kill species of ticks that feed on white-tailed deer and especially those for which white-tailed deer are keystone hosts for adult ticks. As deer feed on the bait, the design of the device forces them to rub against pesticide-impregnated applicator rollers. The rollers, in turn, apply acaricides to their ears, heads, necks, and shoulders where roughly 90% of feeding adult ticks are attached. Through grooming, the deer also transfer the acaricides to other parts of the body. Studies have shown that use of four-poster technology has resulted in the control of 92 of the 98% of free-living tick populations in areas around the devices after three years of use.

FISCAL IMPACT: Vice Chairman Clarke, Supervisor Higgins, and Supervisor Reid understand that there will be a financial cost associated with the implementation of this plan that is yet to be determined. It is their preference that the Lyme Disease Commission implements this plan with assistance from County Staff from Parks and Rec and/or the Loudoun County Health Department. It is essential that the Commission, currently existing Lyme Support Groups, and members of the public that are dedicated to Lyme awareness work together to help solve this health crisis.

Orkin Pest Company, who previously treated Algonkian Elementary School property for tick control, has provided an estimate to treat six public parks using Talstar P®, a professional, EPA approved insecticide that contains the active ingredient, bifenthrin. Talstar P®, would be applied to transitional areas (where normally mowed grass meets taller grass, hedge rows, wooded/shrub lines etc.). This pesticide would not be applied to areas that are within 200 feet of streams, ponds, lakes, or other areas of water. The product will not be applied if it is raining outside.

ALTERNATIVES: N/A

DRAFT MOTION(S): I move that the Board of Supervisors pass the Resolution and Proclamation recognizing 2012 as Lyme Disease Awareness Year, and

I further move that the Board of Supervisors direct the County Administrator to implement the 10-Point Plan to Mitigate Lyme Disease in Loudoun County in an effort to combat Lyme disease, and

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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF LOUDOUN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION

“Recognizing 2012 as Lyme Disease Awareness Year”

WHEREAS, Lyme disease is caused by the spirochete (a corkscrew-shaped bacteria) called *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted by the black-legged tick. Lyme disease was first identified in North America in the 1970s in Lyme, Connecticut, the town for which it was named. This disease has since been reported from many areas of the country and its spread is essentially global, having been reported in 30 countries on 6 continents and several islands. Thus, Lyme disease is not "rare" and 25% of its victims are under 15 years of age; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease mimics many other diseases and is called the second "great imitator" after syphilis. Patients are often misdiagnosed with more familiar conditions, including chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis, Lou Gehrig's Disease, and Parkinson's disease, for which there is no cure, only palliative remedies. Manifestations of cognitive and memory impairment from neurological Lyme disease are commonly misdiagnosed as depression or other mental conditions; and

WHEREAS, prompt treatment with antibiotics during the early stages of Lyme disease can cure the infection and prevent complications of progressive Lyme disease. If diagnosis is delayed, treatment can be difficult and accompanied by progressive debilitation, and recovery will take much longer. Lyme disease inadequately treated can lead to death; and

WHEREAS, the lack of "Lyme literate" physicians in clinical practice in Loudoun County has resulted in frequent misdiagnosis and under-treatment of patients. This marginalization has led to broken families, financial hardship, job loss, increased numbers of people on disability, and death. We have a public health epidemic in need of greater resources to bring a greater awareness about Lyme; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made Lyme disease a nationally notifiable condition in 1982. Over 125,000 cases have since been reported nationwide; making Lyme disease the most frequently reported vector-borne disease. In 2002, the number of cases reported increased by 40% over the prior year to 23,763 cases. The CDC estimates that only 10% of Lyme disease cases are actually reported; and

WHEREAS, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors is initiating a plan of action to address Lyme disease prevention and treatment through prevention and treatment education targeted toward all age groups in addition to conducting field spraying at targeted public parks; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors hereby proclaims the year of 2012 as Lyme Disease Awareness Year in Loudoun County and commits to mitigating the devastating effects of Lyme Disease on the citizens of Loudoun.

Scott K. York, Chairman, At-Large

Janet S. Clarke, Vice Chair, Blue Ridge District

Eugene Delgaudio, Sterling District

Geary Higgins, Catoctin District

Shawn Williams, Broad Run District

Suzanne Volpe, Algonkian District

Ralph Buona, Ashburn District

Ken Reid, Leesburg District

Matt Letourneau, Dulles District