

Job Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Topic 56: Ticks (Lyme Disease)

Introduction: Anyone working outdoors, (areas with tall grasses, shrubs, low hanging branches, or leaf mold) is susceptible to being bitten by a tick. There are several diseases which can be carried by ticks (most well known being Lyme disease). Deer, mice, cattle, dogs, birds, and horses may harbor Lyme disease. Seasonal risk of infection seems to be greatest in June and October.

- The ticks that have been identified as carriers of Lyme disease are the black-legged tick, the lone star tick, and the deer tick.
- Ticks can carry disease in their larval, nymph, or adult stages. In the larval stage they may look like small black specks, the nymph is about the size of a poppy seed, and the adults can be less than 1/8 inch (3 mm) long.
- Ticks do not jump, crawl, or fall onto a person. They are picked up when clothing or hair brushes a leaf or other object they are on.
- Ticks are generally found within three feet of the ground. Once picked up, ticks will crawl until they find a favorable site to feed.

Diseases carried by ticks in the United States: Lyme Disease, Babesiosis (a malaria like infection), Colorado Tick Fever (generally in the western United States including the coast), Ehrlichiosis, Relapsing Fever (common in the western United States), Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (throughout the United States but most prevalent in the east), Tick Paralysis, and Tularemia (rabbit fever).

Signs and symptoms of Lyme disease: Symptoms may last for months or years. Untreated, the disease can cause damage to the heart, eyes, hearing, and brain. In later stages, arthritis and neurological problems can develop. The disease is treatable in the early stages.

- A distinctive rash appears 3–30 days after a tick bite. (A small red spot expanding to several inches with a pale center develops.)

Stage I: Fever, chills, fatigue, headache, nausea (days) **Stage II:** Cardiac abnormalities, neurological problems such as meningitis, extreme fatigue to nerve palsy (weeks/months) **Stage III:** Joint and muscle pain, arthritis (months/years)

Precautionary Measures: The best way to prevent tick borne diseases is to avoid tick bites. Acaricides are toxic to ticks and mites.

- Wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt.
- Tuck your shirt into your pants.
- Tuck your pants into your socks or boots.
- Use tape to close the opening where they meet.
- Wear a hat, and tie back long hair.



- Use an EPA approved insect repellent or pesticide.
- Wear light colored clothing so that a tick can be seen.
- Change your clothes when you return from an area where ticks may be located.
- Shower to wash off any loose ticks.

Tick Check and Removal: Check clothing for ticks on a frequent basis. When you find a tick, do a more thorough tick check.

- When you return from an area where ticks may be located, check all of your body for ticks.
- It may be helpful to have someone else check your back or other areas which are difficult to see.
- Check body parts that bend (back of knee, between fingers and toes, underarms).
- Check pressure points where clothing presses against skin (underwear elastic, belts, neck).
- Inspect other common areas (belly button, around or in ear, hairline, and top of head).
- Do not use petroleum jelly or nail polish remover. Do not prick or burn the tick. This causes infected secretions to enter the wound.
- Place clothing worn in tick infested areas into the dryer for at least 30 minutes in order to kill any ticks.
- Be sure and check pets and other animals for ticks. Use approved tick repellents or products which kill ticks.
- If you want to have the tick checked for disease, place the tick in a clean vial or zip lock bag with a blade of grass, then contact your State Health Department for more information. Lyme Disease Hotline is (1-800-886-LYME).
- Once inside, do a final, thorough tick check and change your clothing.
- Remove unattached ticks promptly.
- Use fine pointed tweezers.
- Grasp the mouth parts of the tick with the tweezers as close to the skin as possible.
- Apply firm steady pressure upward until the tick releases.
- Do not jerk, twist, squash, or squeeze the tick.
- Clean the wound and the tweezers with an antiseptic.



Conclusion: When symptoms appear, contact your physician immediately. Eliminate it, before it develops into stages II and III.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Employee Signatures:

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

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These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.