

# The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

June 2022

## Prepare now for hurricanes

June 1 marked the start of the 2022 hurricane season. As storms increase in severity, prepare in advance and



heed the advice of emergency preparedness officials. Follow this guidance:

- 1 Know Delaware's evacuation routes.** Visit [deldot.maps.arcgis.com](http://deldot.maps.arcgis.com). Have a plan for where you can stay.
- 2 Assemble a go-bag** such as a backpack to grab during an evacuation. Pack a flashlight with batteries, cash, first aid supplies, and medications. Also include copies of your family's health insurance, homeowner's or renter's policies, and prescriptions in a waterproof bag. Pets need their own go-bag with non-perishable food, food and water dishes, leash, carrier, and favorite toy.
- 3 Create a household supply kit** in case you lose power and water for several days, or if flooded or blocked roads prevent you from leaving. Include these contents:
  - Non-perishable food supply for three days, for humans and pets.
  - Water (at least one gallon per person per day) for three days. Remember drinking water for pets.
  - Battery-powered or hand crank radio, extra batteries, flashlight, utility knife, pliers
  - First aid kit and medicines
  - Towels or rags, plastic sheeting, and duct tape

For recommended supply lists, visit [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov) and [PrepareDE.org](http://PrepareDE.org) or use the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) app.

- 4 Make a family emergency communication plan and emergency wallet cards.** Tell relatives and friends where your family will relocate or if you will stay and shelter in place.
- 5 Stay informed.** Sign up for Emergency Alerts and listen to local broadcasts. Visit <https://www.preparede.org/stay-informed/>.

## First shipments of pediatric COVID-19 vaccine expected in Delaware June 20

The Division of Public Health (DPH) anticipates that the first shipments of pediatric COVID-19 vaccine will be delivered to requesting providers on June 20, with the first doses potentially being administered as early as June 21.

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee meets June 15 to discuss amending two Emergency Use Authorizations: 1) to include infants and children 6 months through 5 years of age in the Moderna COVID-19 mRNA vaccine's primary series; and 2) to include infants and children 6 months through 4 years of age in the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 mRNA vaccine's primary series. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) then must approve their recommendations. Find the latest information on [de.gov/youthvaccine](http://de.gov/youthvaccine).

Consistent with other Northeastern states, Delaware's seven-day average of new positive COVID-19 cases rose from 157.1 on April 22, 2022 to 356.4 on June 9, 2022, according to DPH. Community levels of COVID-19 were high in New Castle and Kent counties as of June 13 and had improved to medium in Sussex County, according to the CDC's COVID Data Tracker at [www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker](http://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker).

DPH asks Delawareans to stay one step ahead of COVID-19 by getting vaccinated and boosted when eligible and staying home if you are sick. Get tested if you have symptoms or were exposed. If you test positive, ask your health care provider if you should get treatment. Use a mask in public indoor spaces with poor ventilation and if you have a weakened immune system or live with someone who does.

Find vaccination and testing sites at <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/>.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health

## Tickborne illness in Delaware: more than just Lyme disease

Delaware is home to various species of ticks, all of which can carry diseases that cause illness. Tickborne illnesses reported to the Division of Public Health (DPH) are ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Spotted Fever Rickettsioses, tularemia, and a condition called Alpha-gal Syndrome (AGS).

The Lone Star tick is commonly found in Delaware. It can carry pathogens that cause ehrlichiosis and AGS, a rare but potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. AGS occurs two to six hours after a person bitten by a Lone Star tick eats red meat or other products containing alpha-gal, a sugar molecule found in most mammals. AGS symptoms include hives or itchy rash, nausea or vomiting; heartburn or indigestion; diarrhea; cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; drop in blood pressure; swelling of the lips, throat, tongue, or eye lids; dizziness or faintness; and severe stomach pain.

If you have life-threatening symptoms, immediately call 911. If you have signs of a tickborne disease, do not delay visiting a health care provider. If you have questions about tickborne illness including Lyme disease, contact DPH's Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 302-744-4990 or visit <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/epi/lyme.html>.

Follow these tips to prevent tick bites:

- Avoid grassy, brushy, and wooded areas.
  - Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or buy pretreated items.
  - Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insect repellants.
  - After you come indoors, check your clothing for ticks, shower, and perform a thorough tick check.
  - Remove ticks immediately. (See removal tips at: [https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing\\_a\\_tick.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html).)
- Most diseases are transferred after being attached to the body for longer than 24 hours.
- Prevent ticks on your [pets](#) and in your [yard](#).

Visit a health care provider if you become sick after a tick bite, especially if you have a rash, fever, or alarming symptoms. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers a comprehensive tick guide at <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/>.



**Lone Star Tick**  
[www.CDC.gov/ticks](http://www.CDC.gov/ticks)

## Tobacco use is Delaware's leading cause of preventable death

Over the last 10 years, cigarette use among Delaware adults has decreased 30.7 percent, from 21.8 percent in 2011 to 15.1 percent in 2020, according to the Division of Public Health (DPH). However, tobacco use is still the leading preventable cause of death in Delaware.

To generate more calls to the Delaware Quitline, the state's smoking cessation program, DPH has a new campaign. Developed by Aloysius Butler & Clark with input from current tobacco users, it features a man trapped in a maze; the Quitline is his way out. There are television, radio, billboard, and other ads.

The Delaware Quitline, an evidence-based best practice, has served more than 65,000 Delawareans since it began in 2001. Callers are offered the option to receive free motivational support over the phone, online, or in person from a local health care professional trained in tobacco use cessation. The Quitline now serves Delaware residents ages 13 years and older free of charge. Individuals ages 18 and older may receive free pharmaceutical smoking cessation aids such as nicotine patches and gum.

Reach the Delaware Quitline at 1-866-409-1858 or <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/dpc/quitline.html>. Another option is to use [Quitsupport.com](http://Quitsupport.com), an online tobacco and vaping cessation service.

The best way to quit is to not start. To help youth and young adults to not begin using tobacco products, [DPH's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program](#) offers tobacco cessation resources and

strategies on the Healthy Delaware website, <https://www.healthydelaware.org/Individuals>. DPH's anti-Vape Toolkit is also on HealthyDelaware.org and available at [VapeFreeDE.com](http://VapeFreeDE.com).





## DPH launches birth control campaign

To reduce the state's unintended pregnancy rate, the Division of Public Health (DPH) is providing access to the full range of contraception through a Birth Control Awareness Campaign.

"BC Works For Me" promotes information on access to the full range of contraceptive methods and highlights 53 different options, including long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs). It highlights benefits beyond pregnancy prevention and shares tips on having birth control conversations with parents, children, friends, partners, and providers.

"Close to half of all unplanned pregnancies occur to women using a birth control method that doesn't work well for them, or there is inequitable access to a full range of contraceptives," said DPH Family Planning Administrator Yvonne Fletcher. "It is our goal to provide information and resources so Delawareans can choose a birth control method that is right for them and feel empowered to make their own contraceptive choices."

[DPH's June 2020 Reproductive Health data brief](#) reports that between 2012 and 2018, of Delaware women aged 15 to 44 with a recent live birth, there was a 17 percent increase among women indicating their pregnancy as "wanted then or sooner" and an approximate 29 percent decrease among women indicating their pregnancy as "wanted later or unwanted." There was a 107 percent increase in reversible methods of contraception, an 89 percent increase in intrauterine devices, and a 162.5 percent increase in contraceptive implants. Contraceptive implant use was highest among Hispanic women, Medicaid clients, women with less than 12 years of school, and those living in Sussex County. IUD use was highest among white non-Hispanics and women with more than 12 years of education.

For more information on birth control and to access the birth control campaign resources, visit <https://dethrives.com/healthy-women>. or call 211.

## Delaware WIC has new website

Delaware WIC's new educational website provides evidence-based information on breastfeeding, nutritional feeding practices, and programming that supports the short- and long-term health of eligible pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants and children up to age 5.

The site, [Delaware.WICresources.org](http://Delaware.WICresources.org), also features a link to information and contact numbers related to the baby formula shortage and information on the Delaware WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program which began June 1 and ends October 31. The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program materials guide participants on how and where to redeem their one-time \$30 nutrition coupon provided by the program.

WIC, also known as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant and Children, is a federal program that serves approximately 6.3 million people nationally, including about half of all infants born in the United States. In Fiscal Year 2021, the Delaware WIC program served 17,199 participants.



Visit [Delaware.WICresources.org](http://Delaware.WICresources.org) or follow Delaware WIC on Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube to find information on Delaware WIC's programs and healthy recipes using WIC-approved ingredients.

## How to get food help

**Apply for SNAP benefits** online at [Assist.dhss.delaware.gov](http://Assist.dhss.delaware.gov) or visit a Division of Social Services office. If questions, call 302-571-4900 and select 'Customer Relations.'

**Apply for WIC benefits.** Learn how to apply at [Delaware.WICresources.org](http://Delaware.WICresources.org).

**Access a food pantry.** Dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-560-3372. Text your ZIP Code to 898-211. Visit [www.delaware211.org](http://www.delaware211.org).

**Senior meal boxes.** If you are over the age of 60, you may be eligible for the Senior Nutrition Program. Call 2-1-1 or 302-444-8129.