



Climate Change:

Our Health in the Balance

**Michigan's Public Health Week
April 14 - April 22, 2008**

Waterborne and Vector-borne Diseases

There is a direct connection between climate change and the health of our nation today. Children, the elderly, the poor, and people with chronic health conditions are most at risk for negative health impacts of climate change. Extreme weather (such as heat waves, tornados, hurricanes, or rain) caused by climate change can increase the likelihood of waterborne and vector-borne diseases, which can cause illness or even death.

What You Should Know

- Waterborne diseases are caused by things like bacteria or chemicals in water that people drink, cook with, or play in. These diseases can cause diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and even death. Cholera is an example of a waterborne disease.
- Vector-borne diseases are spread by insects (such as mosquitoes). Insects that live and breed in water can cause diseases with rashes and flu-like symptoms, diarrhea, and even death. West Nile Virus and malaria are examples of a vector-borne disease.
- Michigan's public health system, along with other national, state, and local partners, works to minimize the impact of water and vector borne diseases on you and your family's health, as well as the state's economy.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

CDC-Healthy Swimming

http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/fact_sheets.htm#swimmer

Department of Environmental Quality-Drinking Water

http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3313_3675---,00.html

Michigan State University Extension-Searchable Database and Other Resources

<http://www.msue.msu.edu/portal/>

What You Can Do

Waterborne Disease



Always wash your hands with soap and clean, warm, running water. This is especially important when you're making or eating food, handling a baby, after using the bathroom, or touching something contaminated with floodwater or sewage.



Don't swim in a pool when you have diarrhea. This is especially important for kids in diapers. Also, shower before swimming.



Whether the water you drink is from a tap or bottle, **learn** where it comes from and whether it has been made safe to drink.



Get involved! Organize or help cleanup a local beach, stream, river, or wetland.

Vector-borne Disease



Get rid of standing water (in clogged gutters, wading pools, old tires, hot tub or pool covers that collect water, or toys) where mosquitoes breed.



Enjoy Michigan's great outdoors, but **use insect repellent** with DEET or oil of lemon eucalyptus (repellants with soybean and geranium oil are other options) and wear light-weight clothes that cover arms and legs, especially at dawn or dusk when mosquitoes are more active.



Rinse and refill birdbaths every week, killing breeding mosquitoes.



Add fish (goldfish or native species fish) to your pond or treat it with a *Bacillus thuringiensis* (B.t.) product to safely kill mosquito larvae.

Partners in Planning

✧ Michigan Department of Community Health ✧ Michigan Association for Local Public Health ✧
✧ Michigan Environmental Council ✧ Michigan Public Health Association ✧
✧ Michigan Public Health Institute ✧ Michigan State University ✧
✧ University of Michigan School of Public Health ✧

