



Baltimore City Health Department
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BALTIMORE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT CITY-WIDE ZIKA PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PLAN

Under the direction of Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Commissioner Wen and the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) have worked in concert with city, state and federal agencies to develop a comprehensive, city-wide plan in response to the Zika virus. BCHD has convened over 20 city agencies to focus on source reduction, surveillance, education and the public health response to locally acquired cases. BCHD will continue to work with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to stay abreast of any new information or potential incidents of the disease within and around Maryland.

The city-wide plan is based on a three-pronged approach: *1) Mosquito Surveillance, 2) Case Investigation, and 3) Public Education.*

1. Mosquito surveillance and response to standing water complaints

Zika is primarily transmitted by two types of mosquitoes (*Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*). BCHD has reinstated its mosquito surveillance program to determine the prevalence of *Aedes* mosquitos in neighborhoods. Surveillance will help predict the risk of the Zika virus being transmitted locally and will inform other prevention strategies including the use of adulticide, if necessary.

The best way to prevent Zika is to prevent mosquitoes from breeding by eliminating standing water. City agencies with front line employees will be trained to identify and eliminate standing water as well as to report larger pools they are unable to reach. BCHD will respond to standing water complaints through 311 and will issue violation notices and citations as appropriate. We strongly encourage all residents to monitor their property, empty containers that hold standing water at least every four days and report large bodies of standing water to 311.

2. Case Investigation

As the local public health authority, all potential cases of Zika must be reported to BCHD. The Acute Communicable Disease Program, in conjunction with DHMH, is advising Baltimore City clinicians to ensure that pregnant women and recent travelers to affected regions who may have been exposed to Zika virus receive testing. When a case is confirmed, a public health team including, BCHD Environmental Health staff, health educators and public health investigators will visit the area. The public health investigator will do a home visit to counsel the patient and sexual partners and educate family members about the Zika virus. Other team members will complete an area survey to look for potential mosquito breeding grounds, and confidentially educate neighbors in the area.

BCHD will partner with DHMH and Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to conduct targeted spraying if one of the following conditions occurs:

- 1) There is a confirmed case of Zika;
- 2) An *Aedes aegypti* mosquito identified through surveillance; or
- 3) A threshold level of *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes is identified in a given area.

Spraying will occur within a 300 yard radius of the occurrence. Appropriate notice will be provided to the community in advance of the targeted operation.

3. Community Outreach and Communications

To effectively prepare for and respond to the threat of the Zika virus, residents need to be educated both on the disease and how to mitigate the spread of the virus. By collaborating with city agencies, healthcare providers, and community-based partners, BCHD is coordinating efforts to both educate and empower communities to help combat Zika.

Community Outreach: All divisions within BCHD that perform community outreach will be educated in Zika prevention including disease intervention specialists, community risk reduction staff, maternal health program staff, home visiting nurses, all clinic staff, school nurses, and Safe Streets outreach workers. BCHD will use a “train the trainer” model to train staff from all City agencies in Zika prevention. Additionally, BCHD will provide posters, educational materials and other materials at all community sites. BCHD outreach staff and Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Liaisons will be attending police district meetings this summer to train community members directly.

Zika Ambassador Program: BCHD has developed a program for individuals who wish to become Zika Ambassadors to bring Zika education to their community, business etc. The training packet is available online at <http://health.baltimorecity.gov/zika-virus>. It includes an educational PowerPoint on Zika, informational flyers in English and Spanish, and suggested social media posts. Community Zika Ambassador trainings will also be held.

Conclusion

BCHD has convened partners across the City and State to ensure a strong response to the threat of Zika and created a multi-agency actionable plan. Through mosquito surveillance and control, the elimination of mosquito breeding sites, prompt investigations of potential Zika cases, and robust community outreach and education, Baltimore City is prepared to address the threat of Zika. BCHD’s comprehensive approach to prevent and respond to the virus will enable us to significantly reduce the risk of the virus in Baltimore City.