Jennifer Reid, Director
Ridgefield Health Department
Ridgefield, CT
Blastlyme.org
24,300 people in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains in central Fairfield County

2008 - State of Connecticut awarded Ridgefield Health Department a $50,000 Grant to develop and disseminate a tick-borne disease prevention and early symptom identification program for the 23 towns in Fairfield County.
The BLAST program

- Assembled a team of scientists, health educators and community members to collaborate on the project
- Based program ideas on Health Belief Model
- Focused tips on a peridomestic prevention research study conducted by the Connecticut Emerging Infections Program at the Yale School of Public Health (Connally, Durenat, Yousey-Hindes, Meek, Nelson & Heimer, 2009)
- Created a memorable acronym to highlight top recommendations
- Developed affordable teaching tools
- Offered materials in English and Spanish
- Conducted a training for Fairfield County health departments to share the BLAST Program
Bathe or shower soon after coming indoors.

Bathing or showering within 2 hours of outdoor activity helps remove ticks that haven’t attached.
Look for ticks and rashes

- Do a tick check every night!
- Ticks are very small, and may feed anywhere on the body so check thoroughly.

CDC photo
Opportunity to teach:

How to remove a tick properly and clean the site

How to identify a tick correctly

How to submit engorged ticks removed from family members to the Health Department for testing

Packets with tweezers and prevention information given to everyone who brings a tick in for testing.

Ridgefield submits the highest number of ticks of any town or city in our state for testing

https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.htm
BLAST

Apply repellents to skin and clothing
Factory treated clothing
Spray the edges of your yard and other high risk habitat areas

Create a “tick-safe” zone
Treat your pets with veterinarian recommended products

- Check your pets for ticks.
- Ask your vet about vaccines and products that will help your pet repel ticks.
- Don’t sleep with your pet because ticks on your pet may crawl on to you.
- Caring for pets increases your risk of encountering ticks.
The BLAST tool kit

- Age appropriate power points
- BLAST rack card
- Health fair tabletop display
- Retractable Banner
- Giveaways - magnet, stickers, tattoos, crafts
- Raffle prize baskets
- Boy scout patches
- Social media graphics
Building the health fair display
Importance of partnerships

When solving a community health problem:

• You **cannot** reach enough people by **yourself** to make a significant impact
• You need other people to sustain a health program.
Town leaders and health directors
Hospitals, medical practitioners
Corporations, local businesses and chambers of commerce
Scouts, camps and youth groups
Pharmacists
Veterinarians, trainers and animal rescue groups
Grade, Middle and High Schools
Science teachers, health teachers, school nurses
Health/science/nursing departments

- Western CT State University
- Fairfield University
- Southern CT State University
- UConn Health Center
Moms’ groups, Dads’ Groups
Preschools, Nannies and Au Pairs
Social media campaign created by Discovery Communications

- Letting them play outside without Lyme disease protection is just as dangerous.
- Don’t let a little tick become a big problem.
- Blast them out or they’re coming in.
- Tick Tock: Early detection of Lyme disease is key.
BLAST Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Prevention Program

The BLAST Program was developed in 2008 to raise awareness of the most effective Lyme disease prevention practices, as well as to educate the community about the early signs and symptoms of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases to promote timely diagnosis and treatment.

Be a Lyme Fighter...BLAST Lyme Disease!

Contact the Lyme Disease Prevention Program

Staff Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Reid</td>
<td>Lyme Community Program Director</td>
<td>(203) 431-7066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

News & Announcements
Looking for your Tick Submission Results?
Next Steps......

Community recognizes it has a problem
Materials are created
Key stakeholders are engaged
Why aren’t more people doing what science says will keep them safer?

We asked them.

They’re confused. Especially when it comes to repellents and pesticides
Need our help identifying risks and benefits.
Community behavior and belief studies based on BLAST Program

Uncertainty about pesticide cost, safety and effectiveness.

Western CT State University Tickborne Disease Prevention Laboratory and BLAST Prevention Program
Ridgefield BLAST Program

**Bathe**

- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors - preferably within 2 hours.
- Undressing for a shower means any ticks still crawling on your clothing won't reach your skin.
- Wash your outer clothing 30 minutes on high heat to kill ticks that may remain on clothing.

**Look for Ticks**

- Time in the bath or shower is the perfect opportunity to do a thorough tick check. You may spot them crawling or as soon as they attach. Early removal can reduce the risk of infection. To remove a tick, use fine-tipped tweezers or forceps and grasp the tick as close to the skin surface as possible. Pull the tick straight upward with steady even pressure.

**Apply Repellent**

- Use an insect repellent formulated for direct application to skin. Follow label directions carefully. Apply to neck and behind ears, and evenly onto your exposed skin.
- Use repellents that contain 20% to 30% DEET on exposed skin and clothing for protection that lasts up to several hours.
- Read labels carefully to ensure the products you are selecting are effective against ticks. Most plant-derived repellents are unlikely to provide adequate protection.

**Spray Tick Habitat**

- Research has shown that pesticides are the most effective way to reduce ticks, particularly when combined with landscaping changes that decrease tick habitat in often-used areas of your yard.
- Landscape to create a tick-safe zone. Removing leaf litter and clearing tall grass and brush around the house and birdhouse will reduce the number of ticks.

**Treat Pets**

- Check your pets for ticks daily, especially after they spend time outdoors. If you find a tick on your dog or cat, remove it right away.
- Avoid sleeping with indoor-outdoor pets as ticks do transmit ticks from pet to person.
- Signs of tickborne disease may not appear for 7-21 days or longer after a tick bite, so watch your pet closely for changes in behavior or appetite if you suspect that it has been bitten by a tick.
How to address this barrier:
Movies to engage and educate the community about backyard tick bite prevention with a focus on pesticide use.
EPA Healthy Communities Grant

New Lyme disease campaign being filmed in Ridgefield this summer

By Jennifer Reid on July 23, 2016 in Community, Happenings, News, People

About author

Jennifer Reid

From left to right: Selectman Rudy Marcorn, “Fran the Tick,” and Neela Connolly filming on location in Ridgefield on July 16. — Peggy Stewart photo

WCSU & Ridgefield Health Dept receive EPA grant for tick management

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© Written by Shari Hill

WCSU and Ridgefield Health Department receive EPA grant to educate communities about tick management

Western Connecticut State University and the town of Ridgefield’s Health Department are building upon a long-standing community partnership to reduce the incidence of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases with a new $25,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA Healthy Communities Grant Program funds projects that “…reduce environmental risks, protect and improve human health and improve the quality of life.” The WCSU-Ridgefield-Health Department collaboration was one of 11 projects selected from 70 submissions.
5 Videos in Story Format

Follow a group of neighbors trying to plan a block party, but concerned about tick exposure…
Video 1
Meet the Neighborhood: Confusion about Ticks
Video 2
Tick Management Choices
Video 3
Understanding Pesticides
Video 4: Choosing the Right Pesticide
Video 5
How to Choose a Pest Management Professional
Community Event April 10, 2019

❖ 200 Community members
❖ Family barbecue dinner
❖ Photos with Fran the Tick
❖ Pre Surveys
❖ Tick-Safe Fashion Show
❖ 5 Short Videos
❖ Goodie bags with tweezers and our new yard safety information cards
❖ Post Survey emailed in 30 days
Tick safe dressing fashion show

- Self applied permethrin
- Factory treated clothing
- General recommendations
Spraysafeplaysafe.org
Western CT State Univ. Tick Research Lab

• Videos
• Results of surveys
• Homeowner info. card
• Information links

Blastlyme.org
Ridgefield Health Dept.

• Program research
• Educational materials
• Recorded power point
• Videos
Thank you NACCHO!

2019 Vector Summit