

CASE STUDY: PUBLIC HEALTH

Town of Brookfield Tick Communications Program

Lead Agency: Town of Brookfield Health Department

Funding: annual local Department of Health budget

Report: [Tick Borne Diseases in Connecticut](#)

Project Overview:

The town of Brookfield Health Department created a communications program for the public about ticks and tick-borne diseases in Connecticut, including websites dedicated to [tick-borne diseases](#) and [mosquito-borne diseases](#), a PowerPoint presentation on tick-spread diseases, and an information table in the Brookfield Town Hall with a variety of handouts on managing ticks. They also work with the [local BLAST organization](#) and track trends in the occurrence of tick-borne diseases. BLAST is a co-operative organization between the Housatonic Valley towns run out of Ridgefield. Ridgefield also has a [Ridgefield Lyme Disease Task Force](#).

As a result, they have seen a significant increase in Babesiosis and Anaplasmosis with a clear regression in Lyme Disease numbers. The BLAST organization has a variety of [educational materials](#) for teachers, medical professionals, and community groups.

They coordinate with the CT Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven for free testing of ticks for Babesia, Anaplasma, and Lyme. Depending on the results, they will promote referrals to the resident's physician for further treatment. They also receive HIPAA protected reports from healthcare providers and encourage patients with documented Lyme Disease to join the [Lyme Registry at Danbury Hospital](#). Although they do not provide the service, they do oversee and advise the Public Works and Parks & Rec Departments about spraying.

How Project Contributes to Rural Resiliency:

Ticks and other disease-carrying pests are a significant concern, especially in rural areas. Residents in rural areas have a greater risk of exposure because of the increased habitat for these pests, higher exposure risk from recreation/employment/wildlife, and higher prevalence of animal hosts for the insects.

Suggestions for towns and/or COGs to assist in this type of project:

This public information campaign illustrates the benefits of inter-town and cross-departmental coordination for education and science-based recommendations that help reduce the exposure risk for residents.

Contact for Questions:

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The graphic features a banner with the word "BLAST" in large, bold letters, with "Tick-borne Disease Prevention Program" written below it. To the left, the word "PREVENTION" is written in white on a green background. The background of the banner shows a person's hands holding a red tick, a dog, and a field of yellow flowers.

Outdoor fun starts with the **5 BLAST Steps**.
Whether you are playing in the yard or heading out for a hike, it's important to take steps to avoid tick-borne diseases.

-  **Bathe or shower soon after outdoor activity.**
Wash ticks off before they attach.
-  **Look for ticks and remove properly.**
Quick tick removal is essential.
-  **Apply repellents to skin and clothing.**
Make the safest choices for your family.
-  **Spray tick habitat areas in your yard.**
Assess your property for locations of greatest risk.
-  **Treat pets with veterinarian recommended products.**
Help pets avoid tick-borne diseases and carrying ticks into the home.

Online prevention resources can be found at:
BlastLyme.org

Ridgefield BLAST Handout