



Clinton County Health Department

133 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, New York 12901-2926

“Working Together for a Healthier Community”

health.clintoncountyny.gov



Public Health
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Administration Division

Phone: (518) 565-4840

Fax: (518) 565-4717

News Release

Date: March 11, 2025
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Clinton County, March 11, 2025. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) and their local partners are working closely to monitor Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), also known as H5N1 or bird flu, in Clinton County and to share educational messages with poultry and dairy farms and workers, health care providers, and the community.

HPAI has been widespread in the state for several years and is circulating across the country. This strain of influenza virus has spread from wild birds into poultry, dairy cattle, domestic cats and many species of wildlife. Rarely, it has passed to humans who had direct contact with infected birds and mammals, including dairy cows, and caused illness. At this time, there is no evidence that HPAI has spread from person to person in the United States. To date, in New York, there have been no human cases of HPAI and no detections in cattle.

“HPAI has been present among wild birds in the North Country, in small numbers, since 2022. Clinton County has not seen HPAI cases in domestic poultry, cattle, or other mammals,” explained Director of Public Health Jeffrey Sisson. “While residents may be hearing about HPAI outbreaks in other parts of the state or country, in Clinton County, current activity among wild birds remains within expected levels for our community. The risk to the public is low.”

In New York, Department of Health (NYSDOH), the Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSAGM), and the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) are working together to protect the health of people and animals across the State. As part of this response, NYSDEC launched a web-based [HPAI reporting](#) tool earlier this year to identify the virus in novel bird species and locations. Residents can report any findings of dead birds, especially multiple birds in one place, using this tool.

The DEC advises the public to avoid any contact with sick or dead birds and mammals that may be infected with HPAI. Residents can further minimize the risk of spreading HPAI by preventing contact between sick or dead wildlife and domestic animals. Limit contact with these animals unless necessary, and keep children and pets away. If carcasses need to be removed, use a shovel (if available) and wear disposable gloves, a mask, and eye protection; wash hands and clothing immediately after and triple-bag carcasses and put them in an outdoor trash receptacle.

Residents that keep backyard poultry flocks can visit <https://agriculture.ny.gov/animals/poultry> for more information to help prevent the spread of the disease within their flocks. “While our commercial poultry farms have strict biosecurity and monitoring measures in place, we know we have many residents who keep poultry at their homes,” added Mr. Sisson. “These residents should review their biosecurity plans and take



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precautions to protect their birds, including keeping their flock completely separated from wild birds.” To report sick or dead poultry, call the NYSAGM at (518) 457-3502.

“Again, the risk to the public right now is low,” emphasized Mr. Sisson. “We want to assure our residents that we are paying close attention to the current situation and will share any updates on the impact to human health as appropriate.”

For more information about H5N1 avian influenza, visit <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/avian/>.

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News Release

Date: April 24, 2025
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Champlain Centre Unveils Mamava Pod at Grand Opening Event

Plattsburgh, NY, April 24, 2025. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is excited to announce the grand opening of a Mamava lactation pod at the Champlain Centre mall in Plattsburgh, NY. The ADA compatible pod, installed in collaboration with the CCHD’s *Breastfeeding, Chestfeeding and Lactation Friendly, NY* (BFF-NY) grant, provides chest/breastfeeding parents with a private, clean, and comfortable space to pump or nurse their babies.

The community is invited to join us for a special ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration on Tuesday, April 29th from 10:00am to 11:00am. The grand opening will take place adjacent to the Kid’s Zone. Attendees can enter through the main mall entrance area closest to Kohl’s.

“While mothers are welcome to nurse their children anywhere they wish at Champlain Centre, we are thrilled to offer the option of an easily accessible Mamava pod here for added comfort and convenience,” said Lisa Getty, General Manager of Champlain Centre.

Mamava designs, engineers and assembles their lactation pods in Burlington, Vermont. Pods are accessed through the free Mamava app, which helps parents find lactation spaces – not just Mamava pods – wherever they go. The app opens the pod and allows parents to customize the lighting and airflow, as well as listen to soothing sounds. The pod is equipped with seven-foot solid walls, easy-to-clean surfaces, comfortable benches, ventilation fans, a locking door, and complete wheelchair accessibility.

“Every Mamava pod represents progress toward a more breastfeeding-friendly world,” shared Sascha Mayer and Christine Dodson, Cofounders of Mamava. “The Champlain Centre installation is a testament to what’s possible when businesses and public health organizations come together to prioritize lactation support. We’re proud to be part of this important step for our neighbors across the lake in the Plattsburgh community.”

This grand opening is free to attend. We invite families, community members, and local organizations to join us in celebrating this vital addition to the mall. Attendees will have an opportunity to tour the new Mamava pod. Representatives from Mamava and Champlain Centre will be on hand to answer questions.

If you are interested in making your worksite or community space more breastfeeding, chestfeeding and lactation friendly please contact Health Planning and Promotion at 518-565-4993. To learn more about Champlain Centre, visit: champlaincentre.com. For more information about Mamava, visit mamava.com.

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News Release

Date: April 29, 2025
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Contact: 518-565-4840

Clinton County Enters Tick Season

Clinton County, April 29, 2025. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) reminds residents to be on the lookout for ticks. Ticks can spread diseases that make people and pets very sick. They are most often found in shady, moist areas at ground level. They cling to tall grass, brush and shrubs, usually no more than 18-24 inches off the ground. They also live in lawns and gardens, especially at the edges of woods and around old stone walls. Ticks can enter your yard through woods, tall grass or small animals or birds.

“Now that temperatures are consistently above 40°F, we should expect to see ticks throughout our region,” explained Nichole Louis, RN, BSN, Director of Health Care Services at CCHD. “This is when adult ticks that survived the winter will start to emerge. We will see nymphs as the summer goes on and will continue to see both through the end of the fall.”

The most common type of tick found in our region is the deer tick. Adult deer ticks can be the size of a sesame seed, while nymph, or baby, deer ticks can be as small as a poppy seed.

“The first step in preventing tick bites and tick-related illness is to avoid ticks and the places we know they like to be,” explained Ms. Louis. “When possible, stay away from places where ticks are normally found. If you are walking, hiking or biking, stay toward the center of the path and avoid dense woods and bushy areas.”

Other prevention measures include:

- Use an EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) approved insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon, eucalyptus or 2-undecanone.
- Cover your skin as much as possible. Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Treat clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents) with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Never apply permethrin directly to skin.
- Cover baby carriers and strollers with mosquito netting.
- Stay away from animal nests and teach children to do the same.

Even with your best prevention efforts, you may still come into contact with ticks. Make frequent tick checks routine for everyone in your family—including pets. Pets that spend time outdoors can bring ticks indoors, putting you at risk, even if you haven’t spent time outdoors yourself. Tick checks should include key areas

- more -



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ticks like to hide, such as under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and on the hairline and scalp. Taking a shower as soon as possible after spending time outdoors can also help to wash away unattached ticks. When spending time outdoors, check for ticks frequently so you can remove them before they have a chance to bite you or your family members.

“If you have been bitten by a tick, be sure to tell your doctor and be on the lookout for symptoms,” added Ms. Louis. “The most common symptoms of tick-related illnesses include: fever and/or chills; aches and pains; and a rash.”

To learn more about tick, tick-borne illnesses, and how to prevent them, visit https://health.clintoncountyny.gov/nc_healtheffect/Ticks.pdf.

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Media Alert

Date: May 22, 2025
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Town and Village of Champlain to Kickstart Food Waste Reduction Program

What: The Town and Village of Champlain are excited to announce the grand opening of Clinton County’s first municipal-level food waste collection programs. The programs, established in collaboration with the Clinton County Health Department’s Eat Smart, Waste Less program, will provide residents with community food scrap collection locations. Champlain residents will be able to register for these programs at the town or village offices and have access to three community food scrap collection bins. They will be located at:

- Town of Champlain Main Office, 10729 Route 9, Champlain, NY 12919,
- Bob Venne Park, across the street from the high school, 106 Route 276, Champlain, NY, and
- Across the street from the Champlain Memorial Library, 147 Elm Street, Champlain, NY 12919.

The food scraps collected at the sites will be hauled to River Valley Regeneratives, an organics recycling facility based in Redford, NY.

Who: Janet McFetridge, Mayor, Village of Champlain
Thomas Trombley, Supervisor, Town of Champlain
Jennifer Perry, Cofounder of River Valley Regeneratives
Cody Douglas, Senior Public Health Educator, Clinton County Health Department

Why: This event is free to attend. We invite families, community members, and local organizations to join us in celebrating these landmark programs to repurpose food waste in Clinton County. Attendees will have an opportunity to view the first municipal food scrap collection bins in Clinton County. Food scrap recycling resources will also be available.

When: Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 11:00 am.

Where: Town of Champlain Offices located at 10729 Route 9, Champlain, NY. The event will move to 147 Elm Street, Champlain NY at 11:30 am.

Media Contact: Molly Flynn, Principal Public Health Educator, Molly.Flynn@clintoncountyny.gov.

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Media Release

Date: August 28, 2025
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Bat Tests Positive for Rabies

Plattsburgh, August 28, 2025. A positive rabies test result was reported to the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD). A City of Plattsburgh resident contacted the City Police and Animal Control Officer after finding a bat acting strangely in their front yard. The bat was then removed and sent for testing by City personnel. On 8/27/2025 CCHD was informed that test came back positive for the rabies virus, and immediately contacted USDA and City personnel to investigate. It was confirmed that there were no human or pet exposures in this case.

Rabies is a fatal viral infection, usually transmitted by an infected animal’s bite. Humans can be exposed to rabies through a bite or scratch from a bat. The virus is passed through the animal’s saliva.

“If you see a bat enter your home, you can open windows so the bat can escape,” explained Quinn Rufa, Director/Engineer of Environmental Health & Safety at CCHD. “However, if you didn’t see the bat enter, it can be difficult to know if the bat came in contact with a person or pet. Bats can squeeze through very small spaces (1/2 inch thick) and are one of the few wild animals that successfully enter our homes - potentially bringing the rabies virus with them.”

A person can be bitten by a bat or exposed to its saliva and not know it. Bats have small sharp teeth, which may not leave a visible bite mark, and a bite from a bat during the night may not awaken a sleeping person. You cannot tell if a bat has rabies by looking at it or by the way it acts. The only way to know if an animal has rabies is to send it for testing. In addition to rooms with a person who is sleeping, bats found in a room with an unattended child, someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or someone with a mental disability should also be captured. They might not be able to accurately report if they came into contact with the bat or not.

“Though most bats do not have rabies, we know the virus is present in some Clinton County bats,” explained Mr. Rufa. “If a bat is released and not available for testing, we have to assume that it may have been rabid and treat any person or pet who may have been exposed with a post-exposure treatment.”

“For post-exposure treatment to be effective, it must be started before a person experiences symptoms of rabies,” added Mr. Rufa. “We cannot stress enough the importance of capturing the bat.”

If you find a bat in your home or camp, and are unsure about whether anyone has come in contact with it, capture the bat without damaging the head and contact your health department. In Clinton County, call 518-565-4870. For a quick video on how to properly capture a bat, visit <https://health.clintoncountyny.gov/rabiesprevention>.”



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Use caution when capturing a bat.

- Close doors, windows and closet doors to keep the bat in the room.
- Turn on the lights if the room is dark.
- Wear gloves (heavy, preferably pliable thick leather) and wait for the bat to land.
- Cover the bat with a coffee can or similar container with a lid.
- Slide a piece of cardboard under the can, trapping the bat.
- While firmly holding the cardboard in place against the top of the can, turn the can right side up.
- Replace the cardboard with the lid (if no lid, tape the cardboard tightly to the can).
- Call your local health department. In Clinton County, call 518-565-4870.

Residents are encouraged to be proactive and take steps to keep bats out of their homes. Most bats leave in the fall or winter to hibernate, so these are the best times to bat-proof your home. Look for holes that might allow bats to enter and seal any openings larger than a quarter-inch by a half-inch. Use window screens, chimney caps, and draft-guards beneath doors to attics, and ensure that all doors to the outside close tightly.

Avoid bat-proofing from May through August. If there are young bats in your attic, many of them can't fly and keeping the adults out will trap the young who will die or try to make their way into your rooms.

In addition to bat-proofing, it is important to remember that pets, including indoor cats, must be vaccinated against rabies. New York State Public Health Law requires all dogs, cats and ferrets over four months old to be vaccinated. "Vaccinating your pets is one of the best ways to protect your family from rabies," urged Mr. Rufa. "CCHD offers free vaccine clinics several times each year. To see upcoming clinics visit <https://health.clintoncountyny.gov/rabiesclinics>."

For more information on the rabies virus, visit https://health.clintoncountyny.gov/nc_healtheffect/rabies.pdf.

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