



Pennsylvania
Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources



Pennsylvania
Department of Health



Pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Protection

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Shapiro Administration Provides Tips, Best Practices for Preventing Lyme Disease and Tick Bites at Samuel S. Lewis State Park

Officials encouraged visitors to Pennsylvania's state parks and forests to take simple precautions to prevent tick bites and Lyme disease while enjoying outdoor recreation this summer.

To help residents plan outdoor activities safely, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) maintains an [online dashboard](#) showing where ticks are prevalent so people can take appropriate precautions.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) manages the Commonwealth's 2.2 million acres of state forestlands and 125 state parks, which are free and open to the public every day.

Lower Windsor Township, PA — Representatives from the **Pennsylvania Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Health (DOH), and Environmental Protection (DEP)** visited [Samuel S. Lewis State Park](#) in York County to highlight the importance of preventing tick bites and Lyme disease while enjoying the Commonwealth's parks, forests, and outdoor recreation opportunities this summer.

“Whether you're exploring one of Pennsylvania's 125 state parks, hiking in our 2.2 million acres of state forestlands, or relaxing in one of the more than 6,500 local parks right in your own community, it's essential to understand the risks and be prepared throughout the year,” said **DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn**. “Taking proper steps to reduce the chances of being bitten is key, as ticks are found in both urban and rural

settings — typically in shrubs, weeds, leaf litter, tall grasses, and anywhere there is foliage.”

To help residents plan outdoor activities safely, DOH maintains an [online dashboard](#) that shows where ticks are prevalent so people can take appropriate precautions. Pennsylvania typically ranks among the top 10 states in the country for Lyme disease cases per 100,000 residents. Last year, DOH recorded 18,747 lab-confirmed cases of Lyme disease. Most cases can be treated successfully with a short course of antibiotics, but if left untreated, Lyme disease can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

“Spending time in nature has many benefits to both physical and mental well-being, and I want to encourage all Pennsylvanians to have fun outdoors this summer,” said **DOH Secretary Dr. Debra Bogen**. “However, it’s important to do so safely, by taking precautions beforehand and doing tick checks after. If you are experiencing any symptoms of tickborne illness, I encourage you to contact your health care provider right away.”

Ticks can be found in rural, suburban, and urban settings alike — typically in shrubs, weeds, leaf litter, and tall grasses — and can be present anywhere there is foliage. Taking proper steps to reduce the chances of being bitten is key.

“At the Department of Environmental Protection, we conduct tick surveillance and testing to help keep you informed,” said **DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley**. “Ticks are found in every county, from Philadelphia to Erie, so a few simple steps can help ensure your time spent outdoors is safe and enjoyable.”

Tips for tick bite prevention:

- Cover exposed skin and wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to spot ticks.
- Use EPA-approved insect repellent for tick prevention.
- Before heading outdoors, treat shoes, clothes, and gear with permethrin.
- After coming indoors, check yourself, children, and pets thoroughly for ticks and remove any promptly.
- Shower soon after spending time outside to help wash away ticks that may have gone unnoticed.
- Place clothes in the dryer on high heat to kill any remaining ticks.

The **Shapiro Administration** also reminds Pennsylvanians about the health benefits of spending time outdoors safely, including:

- Improving cardiovascular health
- Strengthening muscles and bones
- Reducing the risk of chronic diseases
- Lowering stress and improving mental health

- Increasing social connection

For more information on Lyme disease, visit DOH's [Tickborne Diseases webpage](#).

[Sam Lewis](#) is an 85-acre state park with stunning views from Mt. Pisgah, an 885-foot-high ridge that separates Kreutz Creek Valley to the north and East Prospect Valley to the south. The park's landscape consists of mowed grass fields on the northern and eastern park slopes, a pine plantation in the southern area, and mature woods in the western section.

Visit DCNR's website for more information about [what to do at state parks](#) and [where to go](#) on public lands, including local parks and for scenic views. DCNR encourages Pennsylvanians to check its [Calendar of Events](#) for seasonal programming happening across the state.

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