



*Mission: Create a culture of deliberate excellence*

*Vision: Every Graduate will be future ready for personal success, college and career, and the global marketplace*

# Gobles Public Schools

**Jeffery N. Rehlander, Superintendent**  
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September 19, 2019

Members of the Gobles Public Schools Community:

In recent weeks, there have been reported cases of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) across Southwest Michigan. Many of you have heard reports in the media about this, including a recent statement from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Eastern Equine Encephalitis is a serious, insect-borne virus that can have serious health consequences, including death. As such, it is important that we take this seriously.

Our first priority, as school officials is the safety and protection of the students in our care. We have been working with the Van Buren/Cass District Health Department and with school officials from across Southwest Michigan, to build a safety plan that is sustainable for the duration of this outbreak.

At this time the Van Buren/Cass District Health Department does not recommend that schools cancel evening events, such as practices or sporting events, or to limit day time activities like recess. If this changes, Gobles Public Schools will make the appropriate adjustments and communicate this. I am including a document provided by the Van Buren/Cass District Health Department that outlines safety measures to protect against mosquito bites.

Additionally, Gobles Public Schools will be taking the following precautions:

- \*Fogging practice/play areas.
- \*Addressing any standing water on our property.
- \*Maintaining landscapes where student activity occurs.
- \*Adjusting times of outdoor co-curricular and extracurricular practices and events such as band and athletic contests to avoid as much as possible participation at dusk when mosquitoes are most prevalent. Please continue to monitor the District Calendar, Websites, and Social Media Platforms for current information.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Rehlander



Van Buren/Cass District  
Health Department

## PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

[www.vbcassdhd.org](http://www.vbcassdhd.org) 800.210.1921

Date: September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019

RE: Health Alert for Van Buren and Cass County Residents

This year, Eastern Equine encephalitis virus (EEE) infected 2 Michigan residents (1 Kalamazoo and 1 Berrien). EEE has also infected animals including 7 horses (3 Kalamazoo, 2 St. Joseph, and 2 Barry) and 2 deer (Cass and Barry) and one suspect case in Cass County. The Van Buren Cass District Health Department received notification from the DNR that a deer in Cass County has tested positive for EEE the week of August 19, 2019.

Van Buren Cass District Health Department along with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is urging residents to stay healthy by following steps to avoid mosquito bites:

- Apply insect repellents that contain the active ingredient DEET, or other U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved product to exposed skin or clothing, and always follow the manufacturer's directions for use.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors. Apply insect repellent to clothing to help prevent bites.
- Maintain window and door screenings to help keep mosquitoes outside.
- Empty water from mosquito breeding sites around the home, such as buckets, unused kiddie pools, old tires or similar sites where mosquitoes may lay eggs.
- Use nets and/or fans over outdoor eating areas.

People can be infected with EEE from the bite of a mosquito carrying the virus. The disease is not spread from animal to humans. Signs and symptoms of EEE include sudden onset of fever, chills, body and joint aches. EEE infection can develop into severe encephalitis, resulting in headache, disorientation, tremors, seizures and paralysis. Permanent brain damage, coma and death may also occur in some cases, per the press release from MDHHS, August 26, 2019. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, seek prompt medical attention.

Follow us on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/VBCDHD> and our website at [www.vbcassdhd.org](http://www.vbcassdhd.org). Please share this post about EEE to your agency's Facebook page: <https://bit.ly/2kknRPM>.



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