

## TICK BITES AND EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

In Connecticut, thousands of public sector employees in outdoor work places experience daily casual exposures to the risk of tick bites. Tick bites are a recognized hazard by the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Conn-OSHA; employers must try to create an environment that is hazard free ([OSHA Sec. 31-370a](#)).

Each employer is required by OSHA to assess the workplace to determine if hazards are present or likely to be present and would require engineering, administrative, or other controls, such as personal protective equipment (PPE). The employer would then need to maintain documentation indicating that the assessment has been done. This is typically illustrated through a Job Hazard Assessment (JHA). Those employees who have been identified as having an exposure to ticks must then receive training from their employers on the following information:

- 1) Areas where ticks can be located / CT land development
- 2) OSHA Duties / Citation understanding
- 3) Disease exposures / Transmission process
- 4) Tick Checks and tick removal
- 5) Employer-issued PPE / Repellants

### Identify

To help identify and mitigate risk of tick bite exposures by staff in their outdoor work areas, towns should review their Job Hazard Assessments (JHA). A section of the JHA should address tick-related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), in accordance with OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.132(a). Recommendations of body protection may include:

- Light colored long sleeve shirt.
- Light colored long pants, light colored coveralls are best.
- Socks tucked into pant legs offer the best protection, or pants bloused, strapped, taped over long socks without any exposed skin.
- Use employer selected repellents labeled for ticks having a minimum of 25% to 30% or greater DEET.
- Permethrin treated work cloths provide excellent protection.
- Cover hair with a hat.

A sample JHA for tick bites is included on the next page of this document for reference. However, for further questions and concerns regarding this process, please contact your dedicated CIRMA Risk Management Consultant.

### Job Task Name: Preventing Tick Exposures & Tick Borne Diseases (TBDs)

Analysis Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Area(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Hazard Risk Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

JHA Performed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Next Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Task Description:** Road side work zones, tree work, brush work, landscaping, grounds keeping, sanitation worker street side pickups, brush firefighting, police K-9 units, police apprehensions, police and EMS search and rescue in woodlands and brush.

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Task Step	Step Description	Hazard Classification	Hazard Description	Hazard Controls	Required PPE
1	<p>Tick Borne diseases are endemic throughout Connecticut. Based on worksite location, determine the possibility of ticks.</p> <p>Example worksite conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leaf litter</li> <li>• high grasses</li> <li>• woodland and grassland (ecotones)</li> <li>• streams</li> <li>• rivers</li> <li>• swamps</li> <li>• unmanaged outdoor landscape</li> </ul>	Biological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicable Disease transmission.</li> <li>• Tick bites can transmit a variety of pathogens. Some can be debilitating and life threatening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review NOISH recommendations on preventing Lyme disease and other TBDs.</li> <li>• Wear long and light colored pants - no blue jeans or dark colors. (Excluding police)</li> <li>• Shirt tucked into pants or wear coveralls.</li> <li>• Use approved tick repellents. Keep a copy of product Safety Data Sheet (SDS).</li> <li>• Permethrin based tick repellent is recommended (excluding bunker gear).</li> <li>• Use lint rollers to roll down the body when entering and exiting a work area.</li> <li>• Carefully remove any imbedded tick as you were trained and save for testing. Report tick bites.</li> <li>• Monitor health for signs and symptoms of TBDs.</li> </ul>	<p>Full length sleeve, head cover, hat, bandana, white socks over light colored pants, repellents, and lint roller.</p> <p><u>Notes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police uniform and dark colored clothing - focus on other elements of tick bite prevention such as repellents, lint rollers, and tick based checks.</li> <li>• Firefighters cannot use repellents - focus more on other elements of tick bite prevention.</li> </ul>

### Training

With any risk management initiative, proper training should be conducted on any provided PPE or policy. These procedures included in the town’s tick policy may include:

- Inspection process and self-checks (before workday / end of workday)
- Removal of ticks
- Incident reporting, including need for immediate medical assistance and claims notification, and accident review.
- Proper use of PPE

### Next Steps and Resources

CIRMA Risk Management can provide assistance in reviewing the town department’s JHA’s and tick policy. For further requests for information on this topic, please contact your CIRMA Risk Management Consultant or visit the State of Connecticut website to review up to date research studies conducted by the Department of Entomology/Center for Vector Biology and Zoonotic Diseases.

- [The Prevention of Tick Bite and Tick-Borne Disease: Tick Checks and Use of Insect Repellent](#)
- [CAES Tick Brochure](#)
- [Tick FAQ](#)

For more information on this topic, please contact your CIRMA Risk Management Consultant. Please visit our training and education program page at [CIRMA.org](http://CIRMA.org) for our current training schedule.