



Jefferson County



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Central Oregon Public Health Monthly Update

May 30, 2025

The Central Oregon Public Health Newsletter is now available in Spanish!

To receive it in your mailbox click [here](#).

Usted puede encontrar el boletín de este mes en español [aquí](#)!

Battling the Bite: Mosquitoes in Central Oregon



Protecting yourself from mosquito bites is the best way to reduce the risk of exposure to mosquito-borne disease. (Photo courtesy of FotoshopTofs on Pixabay)

As the warm months roll in, Central Oregonians embrace outdoor adventures, backyard barbecues, and evenings by the river. But with summer's arrival also comes a persistent pest: mosquitoes. Central Oregon is home to several mosquito species, including *Aedes vexans*, a common variety known for its aggressive biting behavior that is capable of spreading [West Nile Virus](#) and

[Western Equine Encephalitis](#). Unlike some species that prefer stagnant water, *Aedes vexans* can breed in temporary pools, which makes them resilient in the high desert climate.

In the Cascade Mountains, *Aedes communis* can be found in great numbers; this species is known to bite during the day, though they are more persistent at night.

In areas around Prineville, large numbers of *Anopheles freeborni* can be found, which can carry western equine encephalitis which has caused sporadic outbreaks of disease in horses and people since the 1930s.

Learn more about the kinds of mosquitoes we find in Oregon: [Oregon Mosquito and Vector Control Association](#)

Health Risks Associated with Mosquitoes

Though cases of **West Nile Virus** remain rare in Deschutes County, it's important to take precautions as symptoms range from mild fever to severe neurological complications. In 2024, [21 mosquito pools tested positive for West Nile Virus in Oregon](#).

Additionally, Jackson County recently detected the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, an invasive tropical species that is known for its aggressive biting behavior and ability to transmit diseases such as dengue, yellow fever, chikungunya, and Zika virus. Risk of disease transmission remains low.



Wetlands near the Deschutes River in southern Deschutes County provide ideal conditions for certain mosquito species. (Photo courtesy of Four Rivers Vector Control)

Prevention Tips for Residents

Protecting yourself from mosquito bites is the best way to reduce the risk of exposure to mosquito-borne disease. Reduce your risk of mosquito bites by following these simple steps:

- **Eliminate standing water:** Dump out containers that collect rainwater, refresh pet bowls frequently, and keep gutters clear to prevent water buildup.

- **Use protective barriers:** Window screens, long sleeves, and insect repellent (with DEET or picaridin) can help keep mosquitoes away.
- **Time outdoor activities wisely:** Mosquitoes are most active during dawn and dusk, so consider adjusting your schedule for outdoor fun.
- **Read more here:** [Mosquito Control | Deschutes County Oregon](#)

Community Efforts to Manage Mosquito Populations

Central Oregon has two programs that monitor and manage mosquito populations - residents can support their efforts by reporting mosquito hotspots.

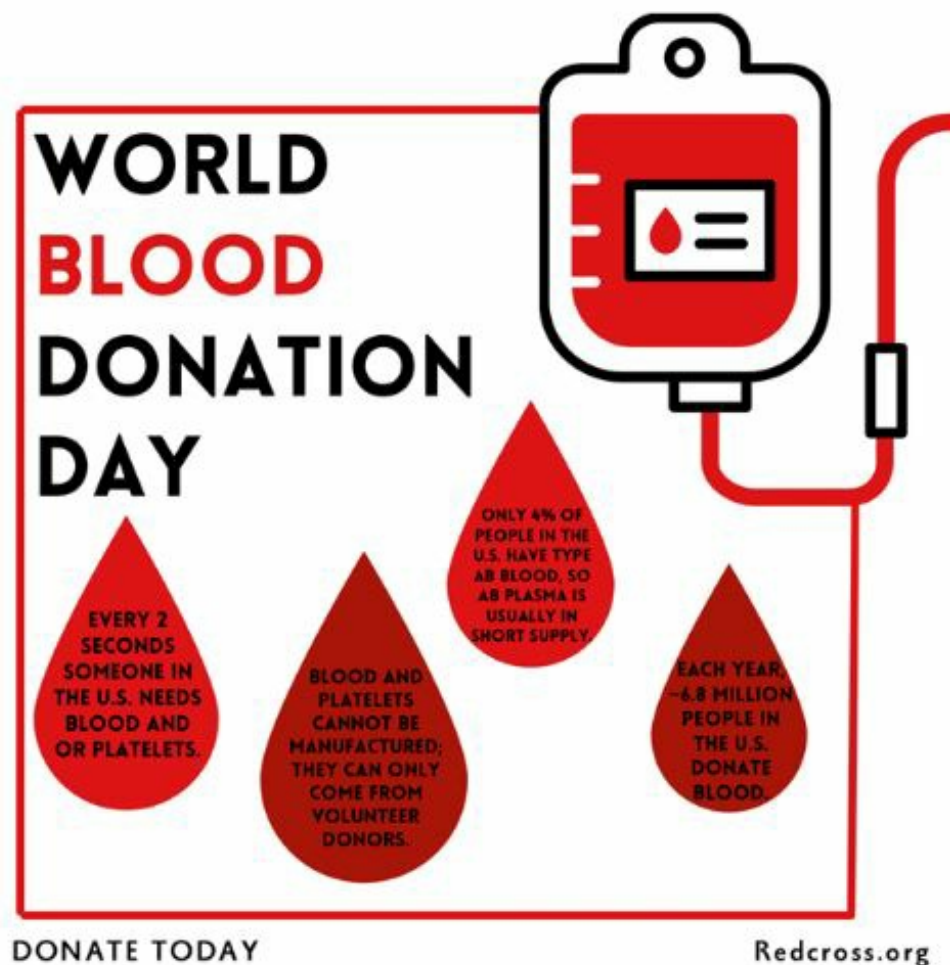
In southern Deschutes County, the **Four Rivers Vector Control District** provides mosquito management services. Residents within this district [can report mosquito complaints and request treatment](#). Additionally, [Crook County Vector Control](#) plays a vital role in mosquito management. They use an Integrated Vector Management (IVM) approach, which includes surveillance, source control, and public education to minimize mosquito-related health risks.

Looking Ahead

While mosquitoes are an inevitable part of summer in Central Oregon, awareness and prevention can significantly limit their impact. Staying informed, taking proactive steps, and working together as a community can help ensure that these buzzing pests don't ruin outdoor adventures.

As the temperatures rise, take precautions to enjoy all that Central Oregon has to offer—without the itch!

The Red Cross Celebrates World Blood Day 2025



Every year, the United States and 194 countries around the world, celebrate World Blood Donor Day on June 14th. This day serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank donors for their life-saving gifts of blood.

The need for blood is constant and makes a difference between life and death every single day. Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood, and every 15 seconds, someone needs platelets. One in seven hospital patients will need a blood transfusion for things like surgery, trauma, cancer treatment, or treating disease.

Blood donations are essential for patients who need medical treatments. For example, the [Dandridge family](#), a father and three children who have sickle cell disease, the most common genetic blood disorder in the United States. Sickle cell disease can cause severe medical issues and pain, and blood transfusions are used to treat the disease. Blood and platelet transfusions also saved [Sandy Thornton](#), a cancer survivor from Dallas, Oregon, who needed 55 platelet and 25 red blood transfusions while awaiting a bone marrow transplant.

Without A, B and O, we can't save anybody.



Only **3** out of **100** people
donate blood in the U.S.



Blood types typically go
missing during the **summer**.



Every **two seconds**,
someone needs blood.

#MissingTypes
RedCrossBlood.org/MissingTypes



Donating blood is one of the most impactful ways a person can help others. One single donation can save up to three lives. There is no substitute for human blood, and volunteer blood donation is an essential part of healthcare across the world. Maintaining blood supply is the American Red Cross Cascades Region's mission. In 2024 alone, they collected over 152,000 red blood cell units. That's 16,627 in Deschutes County, including over 104 units from office blood drives.

How to donate blood in Central Oregon:

Our local Red Cross chapter makes it easy to find a local blood drive! Check out redcrossblood.org, and use their "find a blood drive" option on the homepage. Enter your zip code to find an upcoming blood drive near you!

What to expect during your donation:

It can be understandable to feel scared or nervous before your first donation. Blood drive volunteers will make you feel safe, comfortable, and answer any questions you have. You complete a screening questionnaire for eligibility, which includes:

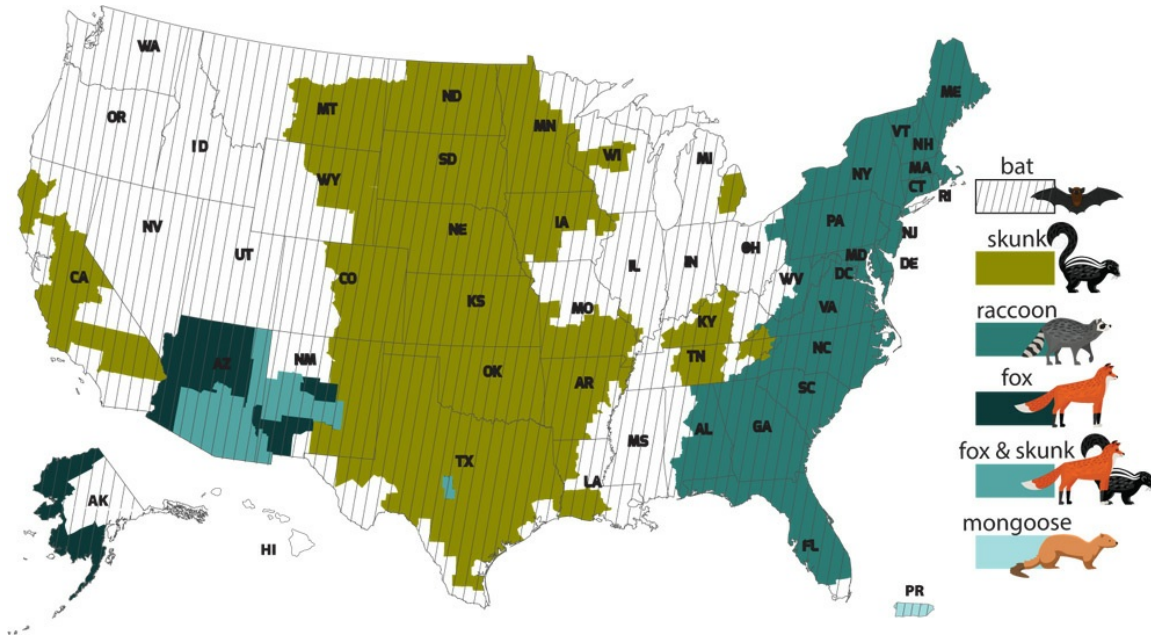
- You must be 16 years old (with parental consent if under 18)
- Weigh at least 110 pounds
- Be in generally good health

You must bring a photo ID to your appointment and have had a meal and water before your appointment. While blood donation itself only takes about 10 minutes, expect your appointment to take around an hour from questionnaire to recovery. Once complete, you will wait in the recovery area for 10 – 15 minutes, enjoying snacks and drinks while you wait.

If you or a loved one have ever been hospitalized or injured, you might understand just how important blood transfusions can be. Whether you donate often, or are considering for the first time, your contribution is vital and can offer someone else a second chance at life. Consider donating blood [today!](#)

Central Oregon Public Health Quarterly Report 2025

The latest issue of the *Central Oregon Public Health Quarterly* offers a comprehensive [2024 Communicable Disease \(CD\) Year-in-Review](#). This includes regional communicable disease case counts and rates for Central Oregon (ages 5+) compared to statewide data, along with five-year trends from 2019–2023. This quarter also features a CD spotlight on animal bites and rabies.



Click [here](#) to read this issue and explore [past quarterly reports](#).

Youth Health and Screen Time

Most parents say it is **important** to talk to kids about **screen time** and **mental health**.

Too much screen time can lead to issues with sleep, focus, social skills, and anxiety and depression.

[Click here](#) for **tips** and **resources** to support **healthy** screen time.

For mental health support you can call, text or chat **988** at any time.



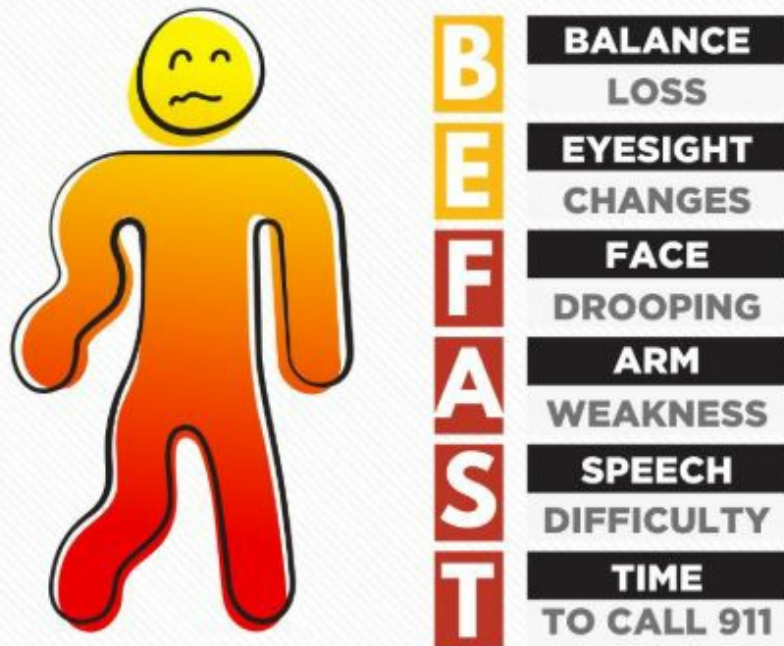
For local support: KIDS Center has materials and free local trainings to help parents and caregivers protect youth from the potential harms of media and technology use. Start with this [Grade by Grade Guide to Media Use](#) and [KIDS Center's Training Calendar](#) to see what free local trainings are available.

Stroke Awareness

Deschutes County is committed to reducing the incidence and impact of stroke through public education, improved healthcare policy, and community-based initiatives.

Stroke is the 4th leading cause of death and a major cause of long-term disability in Oregon, with thousands of Oregonians suffering a stroke each year.

The signs of stroke can be remembered by the acronym B.E.F.A.S.T.:



We're proud to recognize the important work of Stroke Awareness Oregon, the only nonprofit in the state dedicated solely to stroke prevention, B.E.F.A.S.T. education, and supporting stroke survivors and their families. If you or someone you know is affected by stroke, Stroke Awareness Oregon offers support and resources. Learn more at www.strokeawarenessoregon.org.

Learn the signs of stroke, understand your risk, and take steps toward prevention and early intervention. Watch this [educational video](#) to learn more about stroke prevention, the B.E.F.A.S.T. method, and recovery.

Bed Bugs: A Hidden Threat to Travelers

Bed bugs are every traveler's nightmare—small, sneaky, and capable of turning an idyllic summer vacation into an itchy disaster. Whether it's a rustic lakeside cabin or a five-star resort, bed bugs can lurk in any accommodation, making vigilance key to avoiding an unexpected infestation.



Hotel room (Photo courtesy of Pixabay, royalty free)

Why Travelers Are Vulnerable to Bed Bugs

Hotels, hostels and other overnight accommodations offer the perfect environment for bed bugs to spread. Guests bring luggage from different locations, sometimes from infested homes, airports, or other hotels. Bed bugs hitchhike on clothes, suitcases, and bedding, finding new hiding spots in mattresses, headboards, carpets or even electrical outlets. Unlike other pests that thrive in dirty environments, bed bugs don't discriminate based on cleanliness. Luxury hotels and budget lodgings alike are at risk. Their ability to survive months without feeding and hide in tiny cracks makes them difficult to detect and eliminate.

Health Risks Associated with Bed Bugs

While bed bugs don't transmit diseases, they can cause a range of physical and psychological health problems:

- **Skin irritation** – Bites often result in itchy, red welts, which can cause excessive scratching, leading to infections.
- **Secondary infections** – Scratching bite wounds can introduce bacteria, leading to skin infections like impetigo or cellulitis.
- **Allergic reactions** – Some individuals experience severe swelling or hives due to an allergic response to bites.
- **Mental health impact** – Infestations can cause sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, and paranoia, affecting overall quality of life.
- **Learn more about bed bugs on this EPA page:** [Bed Bugs: Get Them Out and Keep Them Out | US EPA](#)



Photo of a person's arm with bed bug bites (courtesy of Harold Harlan, AFPMB, epa.gov)

How to Inspect Your Lodging

To avoid bed bugs, follow these steps when you arrive at your lodging:

1. **Check the bed and headboard** – Pull back the sheets and look for small bugs, dark spots, or shed skins around the seams of the mattress and edges of the headboard.
2. **Inspect furniture and luggage racks** – Bed bugs can hide in upholstered chairs, curtains, and nightstands.
3. **Keep luggage elevated** – Place your suitcase on a hard surface rather than the bed or carpet.

If you suspect bed bugs in your room:

- **Notify hotel staff immediately and request a different room.**
- **Choose a room far from the infested one, as bed bugs can spread through walls.**
- **If you've been exposed, inspect your clothing and bags before leaving.**

How to Get Rid of Bed Bugs

If you unknowingly bring bed bugs home, follow these removal strategies:

1. **Wash & dry on high heat** – Clothes, bedding, and soft fabrics should be laundered at a temperature above 120°F.
2. **Vacuum thoroughly** – Pay special attention to cracks, corners, and fabric surfaces. Dispose of the vacuum bag immediately.
3. **Use bed bug mattress encasements** – Special covers trap bed bugs inside, starving them, and make it harder for bed bugs to hide.
4. **Apply insecticides or heat treatments** – Some chemical sprays target bed

bugs, but professional exterminators often use high-heat treatments to kill all life stages. Be sure to use chemicals [according to label instructions](#) to avoid unnecessary exposure to toxic chemicals. Learn more at [Bed Bugs | Deschutes County Oregon](#)

5. **Declutter & seal cracks** – Reduce hiding spots by sealing gaps in walls and furniture.



Canvas strap of old box spring covering that is housing adults, skin castings, feces, and eggs. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Louis Sorkin, epa.gov)

Preventing Bed Bug Encounters While Traveling

- Use **bed bug-proof luggage liners** or encasements.
- Keep clothing **sealed in plastic bags** during hotel stays.
- Avoid unpacking into hotel dressers—store clothes in a **sealed suitcase**.
- After travel, **inspect and clean** luggage before bringing it indoors.

Bed bugs may be a growing concern, but with proper awareness and precaution, travelers can minimize their risk. By inspecting hotel rooms and other lodging accommodations carefully and following prevention tips, you can enjoy your trip without bringing unwanted souvenirs home. Enjoy your safe summer travels!



Do you have feedback for us? Is there a public health topic you haven't seen covered but would like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Or a topic you'd like to see more of? Please take a moment to complete our [quick reader feedback survey](#). We're always looking to improve our newsletter and your input can help highlight future topics!

Health Services hosts numerous classes and special events each month!

For details about these events and any updates please visit our [Health Services Calendar](#).

Public Health Resources:

- Central Oregon public health web resources:
 - [Crook County](#)
 - [Deschutes County](#)
 - [Jefferson County](#)

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