

# Hiawatha CARE Project: Fact Sheet

## Issue: Bugs and Pests



### Why are Bugs and Pests Important?

Pests include a variety of nuisance animals and insects that can affect health, housing, and the environment. Undesirable pests that impact homes and businesses in urban areas include ants, bed bugs, fleas, lice, mice, mosquitoes, raccoons, rats, roaches, and ticks. Pests are drawn by food and water and may require comprehensive strategies in order to get rid of them.

### How Do Bugs and Pests Affect Us Locally?

Some pest issues are localized to a specific location. For example, bed bug, roach, rodent, or flea infestations typically impact one house, although in apartment building an outbreak in one unit may spread throughout a building. Other pests are community issues – a person can be bitten by mosquitoes and ticks anywhere in a community – so a homeowner cannot totally eliminate risks of exposure to those pests.



### Health Impacts

- Rodents carry a variety of diseases that can affect humans either directly or indirectly through mites, ticks, fleas, or mosquitoes that transmit diseases from rodents to humans.
- Raccoons and bats can carry rabies.
- Roaches and rodents leave allergens that may trigger asthma.
- Mosquitoes spread diseases, such as West Nile virus, but these diseases are uncommon in Minnesota.
- Tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease, affected more than 11,000 Minnesotans between 1986 and 2008.<sup>1</sup>
- Pesticides to treat pests can be poisonous and a danger to animals and people, especially children.

### Environmental Impacts

- Pests are competitors for food and natural resources.

### Financial Impacts

- Value of products damaged.
- Cost to prevent and control pests.

### Hiawatha CARE Project Partners

Alexander's Import Auto Repair	Hennepin County	Minnesota Department of Health
American Lung Association of Minnesota	Hennepin - University Partnership	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Blue Construction	Little Earth of United Tribes	Mississippi Watershed Management Org.
City of Minneapolis	Longfellow Business Association	Preventing Harm Minnesota
East Phillips Improvement Coalition	Longfellow Community Council	St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church
Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota	Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church & Longfellow Lutheran parishes	US Environmental Protection Agency
Gardening Matters	Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	Women's Environmental Institute

# Hiawatha CARE Project - A project of Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works

## What Can Individuals Do?

- Understand which pests are problems and how to keep them away.
- Understand what to do if a pest bites. Seek treatment or watch for the early symptoms of diseases.
- Learn about pesticide-free ways to solve pest problems.
- Clean up crumbs and food spills completely.
- Store food in tightly sealed containers.
- Caulk cracks and weatherstrip windows and doors to eliminate easy paths of entry. Check for foundation cracks or spaces.
- Fix plumbing leaks and damp basements to remove a water source for insects.

## What Can the Community Do?

- Identify pests in the community and develop methods to prevent or eliminate them.
- Identify opportunities to work with multi-family housing managers and owners to reduce pest outbreaks.
- Set up community workshops to educate on non-pesticide options for dealing with pests.
- Buy in quantity to lower prices for individuals needing items such as caulk and weatherstrip.

## What Can the City, County, and State Do?

- Continue to enforce building codes and housing maintenance codes to minimize opportunities for pests to harm people and structures.
- Continue work to educate the public on pesticide-free ways to prevent or eliminate pests.

## For More Information

Centers for Disease Prevention and Control,  
[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/insects/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/insects/index.htm)

Minnesota Department of Health,  
[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/pests/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/pests/index.html)

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency,  
[www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11379](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=11379)

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides,  
[www.pesticide.org/solutions/home-and-garden-toolbox/home-and-garden-toolbox](http://www.pesticide.org/solutions/home-and-garden-toolbox/home-and-garden-toolbox)

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota Department of Health. Lyme Disease Statistics.  
[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/lyme/statistics.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/lyme/statistics.html)

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## What is the CARE Project?

The Hiawatha CARE Project is a new effort to address environmental toxins in western Longfellow and East Phillips. The project brings together two dozen business, community, government, and non-profit agencies in a community-

driven effort to identify, prioritize, and address environmental risks in the area.

The project was initiated in December 2010 when Hennepin County received a \$100,000 Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) award from the

US Environmental Protection Agency. The CARE program supports local collaborations to reduce toxins in the local community.

## More Information:

[www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com/care](http://www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com/care)  
612.348.9344.