

PROCLAMATION FOR 2013 LYME DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, infected ticks carrying the bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi* which causes Lyme disease, continue to spread throughout North Carolina as 3 counties are now classified as "endemic" for Lyme disease; and

WHEREAS, the total numbers of both suspected and confirmed Lyme disease cases reported to our state health department continues to rise each year with over 1000 case events reported in 2012; and

WHEREAS, ticks commonly found in North Carolina have been known to transmit Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Ehrlichiosis, STARI, Babesiosis and Anaplosmosis to residents; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Division of Public Health encourages physicians and health care providers to consider the diagnosis of Lyme disease in patients who present the symptoms of infection, even if the patient has no travel history outside of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Lyme disease is difficult to diagnoses because it imitates other conditions and no reliable laboratory test can prove who is either infected or bacterial-free, which often leads to under-diagnosis or misdiagnosis; and

WHEREAS, early indicators of infection include flu-like symptoms, characterized by chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches and swollen lymph nodes; and

WHEREAS, weeks or months later, patients with untreated or under-treated Lyme disease can suffer from permanent and sometimes life-threatening damage to the brain, joints, heart, eyes, liver, spleen blood vessels and kidneys. For this reason it is imperative that all who may be exposed to Lyme disease receive immediate treatment; and

WHEREAS, the best solution to reduce the risk of contracting Lyme disease is awareness and education about the seriousness of this illness and the need for our residents, especially children, to practice personal preventive techniques when engaging in outdoor activities - such as frequent tick checks, use of tick repellent and proper tick removal; and

WHEREAS, the warm summer months are considered the most active time for ticks and when the majority of residents are exposed to ticks during outdoor activities. Therefore it is important that residents are aware of the potential for acquiring Lyme disease in our town and the preventive measures they can take to minimize the risk of infection.

THEREFORE, I, Joseph W. Peel, Mayor, hereby proclaim May as "**LYME DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH**" in the City of Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Joseph W. Peel
Mayor

Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC
City Clerk