U.S. Department of Transportation

**Federal Aviation Administration**

# Memorandum

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Prevention of Lyme disease related complications in agency employees

Date: OCT 16 2000

Reply to Attn. of:

From: Deputy Federal Air Surgeon, AAM-2

To: National OSHECCOM Members
Director, Office of Environment and Energy, AEE-1
Director, NAS Transition and Implementation, ANS-1
Regional Flight Surgeons

Lyme Disease is a vector-borne infectious disease, reported by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to be the most commonly recognized vector-borne illnesses in the United States. Lyme disease is caused by a bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi* or related species, and is transmitted by the bite of several tick (*Ixodes*) species.

Education and careful work practices can reduce Lyme disease related complications in agency employees. Appropriate facility grounds maintenance can reduce tick populations. Employees who have potential exposures to ticks should use proper dress and chemical repellents, carefully inspect their skin when leaving an area of tick infestation and at the end of each day, and remove ticks promptly when found. Employees with a rash, or other symptoms, should seek medical attention.

The Office of Aviation Medicine currently recommends that Lyme vaccinations not be provided or reimbursed by the agency, due to questions of efficacy and long term safety.

Employees may discuss the potential risks and benefits of Lyme vaccinations with their private physicians, and have the option of obtaining this series under their private health insurance.

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