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May 2, 2016

[Videos available here](#)

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City of Newark Raises Awareness for Lyme Disease

Efforts Coincide with May as National Lyme Disease Awareness Month

Newark, DE - Parking meters along East Main Street in Newark have a whole new look this month, covered in green yarn to help raise awareness for Lyme disease. The "yarnbombing" is one of several outreach efforts within the City to recognize May as Lyme disease awareness month. Since mid-April, numerous City employees, along with elected officials, have also participated in the Take a Bite out of Lyme Disease Challenge, a nationwide effort to raise awareness and funding for improved Lyme disease diagnosis and treatment.

"We know Lyme disease impacts so many of our friends and neighbors throughout the state," said Mayor Polly Sierer. "These simple acts allow us to help bring awareness to the disease, highlight prevention efforts and encourage increased funding for diagnosis and treatment efforts."

The yarn coverings on the parking meters are a result of the efforts by members of two volunteer groups: Newark Free Library (NFL) Yarnivores and KTOG (Knit Together in Love). Twenty-nine women, along with their friends and families, spent hours knitting the covers before sewing them onto the meter polls. They will remain in place through the end of May. For one volunteer, the effort is personal.

"Chronic Lyme disease has affected every aspect of my life for the last 18 years by leaving me with chronic nerve pain and other symptoms," said Mimi Eastman, who recently joined the NFL Yarnivores. "I hope awareness will spare someone from going through what I have been through and still struggle with today. Knitting and crochet help me cope with my pain and stay off my feet, where the most nerve damage has been done."

To build on the month-long awareness efforts, Mayor Polly Sierer kicked off a series of videos for the Take a Bite out of Lyme Disease challenge, daring City Manager Carol Houck, Councilwoman Marge Hadden and Parks & Recreation Director Joe Spadafino to participate by biting into a lime and donating funds to the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society. The videos have received thousands of views online and others have challenged local law enforcement, business owners, friends and neighbors to participate in the awareness effort.

Delaware is ranked as one of the top 14 states for diagnoses. The CDC estimates there will be over 300,000 new cases in the United States each year. Children ages five - 14 are at greatest risk of acquiring Lyme disease and constitute approximately 25% of all reported cases. If diagnosed in the early stages, Lyme may be effectively treated. For more information, visit www.ilads.org or www.lymediseasechallenge.org.

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