

7/18/18-AN INTERNATIONAL TRAVELER HAS ARRIVED IN NEW YORK. OFFICIALS WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SAY THE LONGHORNED TICK, A NATIVE OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, IS NOW IN THE EMPIRE STATE. SO FAR THE BLOODSUCKERS ARE LIMITED TO WESTCHESTER COUNTY, BUT THEY'RE EXPECTED TO STEADILY SPREAD TO THE REST OF NEW YORK. THE TICK HASN'T BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A CARRIER FOR ANY NEW DISEASES, BUT OFFICIALS SAY IT'S LIKELY TO CARRY THE SAME DISEASES AS OUR NATIVE TICKS.

7/26/18-THE NUMBER OF LOCAL RESIDENTS BEING PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS HAS PLUNGED. THAT'S ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY FROM BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD. THAT FOUND A DROP IN LEGAL PRESCRIPTIONS ACROSS THE STATE AS DOCTORS RECONSIDERED USING PAINKILLERS LIKE VICODIN AND OXYCODONE. BUT THE NUMBERS ARE STILL HUGE. ROUGHLY 25 PERCENT OF RESIDENTS WITH HEALTH INSURANCE HAVE RECEIVED OPIOIDS IN THE LAST YEAR. THAT'S DOWN FROM 38 PERCENT JUST FOUR YEARS AGO.

7/31/18-HOW DANGEROUS IS THE LONGHORNED TICK? THAT'S THE QUESTION MEMBERS OF THE STATE SENATE ARE ASKING. THEY'VE REQUESTED THE STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE PARASITE. EARLIER THIS YEAR A ROUTINE FIELD SURVEY DISCOVERED THE TICK IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY. THE TINY CREATURE IS A NATIVE OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AND CAN CARRY TRANSMIT THEILERIOSIS, A POTENTIALLY FATAL LIVESTOCK DISEASE. OFFICIALS STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT HOW THE TICK TRAVELED FROM ASIA TO NEW YORK.