Tick Collection and Testing for Borrelia Burgdorferi (the bacteria which causes Lyme disease) Information Sheet

1. Attempt to remove the tick intact. Usually, you can pull the tick out straight with a pair of tweezers. **Do not put the tick into formalin or alcohol.** If the tick is damaged or is too dry it cannot be tested.

2. After removing the tick, place it in the provided container or a Ziplock bag with a paper towel or cotton ball moistened with water. Keeping the tick moist will keep the tick from drying out. **LABEL THE CONTAINER**

3. Required information for the tick to be tested: Name, date of birth, gender, phone number, mailing address, date and time tick was removed, and the geographic location where the tick was acquired.

4. Only the species **Ixodes pacificus** carries the bacteria that causes Lyme Disease in this area. There is no charge by PHB Laboratory for identification of the tick species.

5. There is a charge (please call for price) to have the tick tested for the bacteria that causes Lyme Disease. Please make checks payable to H.C.P.H. **Tick testing is not covered by Insurance or Medi-Cal.**

6. Clients will be phoned directly for all **positive** tick reports. All reports (positive or negative) are mailed.

**Interpretation of Results**

The fluorescent antibody test performed is specific for **Borrelia burgdorferi**, the causative agent of Lyme disease. A positive result from this test indicates that the tick carries the Lyme disease bacteria, **B. burgdorferi**. It does not necessarily mean that the bacteria have infected the bitten person. Studies have shown that, among other factors, the possibility of infection with **B. burgdorferi** increases with the amount of time the tick has been attached to the person. The development of Lyme disease varies greatly.

A PERSON BITTEN BY A TICK CARRYING BORRELIA BURGDORFERI SHOULD ALWAYS CONSULT WITH THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

A non-reactive test for **Borrelia burgdorferi**, indicates that the tick tested did not harbor **Borrelia burgdorferi**, within the limits of the fluorescent antibody test. A negative test does not mean that the person is not infected by **Borrelia burgdorferi**; the person may have been bitten by another tick, or may have been bitten at another time. Ticks can cause many other diseases besides Lyme disease.

IF A PERSON WHO IS BITTEN BY A TICK BECOMES SICK IN ANY WAY, THEY SHOULD TELL THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER THAT A TICK HAS BITTEN THEM.

- If you have medical questions you may also contact the Public Health communicable disease program at 707-268-2182
- For more information go to www.cdc.gov/lyme