



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Department of Health and Social Services

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State Reports Mosquitoes Positive for West Nile Virus in Stamford

STAMFORD, CT – The State Mosquito Management Program announced that mosquitoes trapped in Stamford on August 14, 2014, have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These are the first positive mosquitoes identified in Stamford by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) this year.

To monitor WNV, the CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state from June through October. Mosquito traps are set by the CAES every ten days at each site on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date. So far this summer, positive mosquitoes have been identified in four other towns – Bridgeport, Danbury, New Britain and Stratford. There have not been any human cases of West Nile Virus reported in Connecticut at this time.

According to Anne Fountain, Director of Health and Social Services, City of Stamford, “It is imperative that all Stamford residents take precautions to avoid contact with mosquitoes. This is particularly important for people over the age of 50. We know that mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk. Simple measures like long pants, long-sleeved shirts, head coverings and socks will minimize exposure to mosquitoes, which may carry the virus. The use of insect repellent is also helpful, but make sure to read instructions before applying.”

For additional protection, the City has completed one round of larviciding, in over 14,000 catch basins throughout the City, and will be doing another round in September.

Most people who are infected with WNV and become ill will have a mild illness that may include fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, or a skin rash. Less frequently, people develop severe illness of the nervous system that can also include neck stiffness, disorientation, loss of consciousness, tremors, muscle weakness, and paralysis. Persons older than 50 years of age are more likely than younger persons to suffer the more severe health consequences if they become infected with WNV.

Precautions to avoid mosquito bites include:

- Minimize time outdoors at dusk and dawn.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair.

- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long-sleeved shirts. Clothing material should be tightly woven.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors.
- Consider using mosquito repellent when it is necessary to be outdoors. Always use according to label instructions. The most effective repellents contain DEET or Picaridin.
- When using DEET, use the lowest concentration effective for the time spent outdoors read directions and wash treated skin when returning indoors. Do not apply under clothing, to wounds or irritated skin, the hands of children, or to infants less than two months old.

Measures to reduce mosquitoes around the home include:

- Dispose of water-holding containers, such as ceramic pots, used tires, and tire swings.
- Drill holes in the bottom of containers such as those used for recycling.
- Clean clogged roof gutters.
- Turn over objects that may trap water when not in use such as wading pools and wheelbarrows.
- Change water in birdbaths on a weekly basis.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, and when not in use, use pool covers and drain when necessary.
- Use landscaping to eliminate areas where water can collect on your property.

Additional resources for information on West Nile virus and mosquito management:

- The Department of Public Health website at www.dph.state.ct.us
- The Department of Environmental Protection website at www.ct.gov/dep
- The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Web site at www.ct.gov/caes
- The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html

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