

News



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WEST NILE VIRUS FOUND IN MOSQUITOS IN FIVE CT TOWNS: RESIDENTS URGED TO PROTECT AGAINST MOSQUITO BITES

HARTFORD - The State Mosquito Management Program today urged Connecticut residents to protect themselves from mosquito bites and mosquito-borne diseases. The warning comes as the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has identified West Nile Virus (WNV) infected mosquitos in five towns: Bridgeport, Easton, New Canaan, Stratford and Waterbury.

“Mosquito-borne illness is a threat to take seriously, especially from now until well into September,” said Dr. Raul Pino, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health. “I ask everyone to prevent mosquito bites by eliminating standing water around your home, making sure your door and window screens are in good repair, and covering bare skin and using insect repellent when outside – especially at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.”

“The current indicators suggest a very active season for WNV. Mosquito populations are building and will continue to do so, especially with the persistence of hot-muggy weather,” said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. “The surrounding states are also reporting early WNV activity.”

The mosquitoes were collected from June 18 to July 10, 2018, by CAES.

No human or horse cases have been reported with WNV-associated illnesses in Connecticut this season. Since 2000, 134 human cases of WNV have been diagnosed in Connecticut residents including three fatalities.

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes residents should:

- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods, or when mosquitoes are most active. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven materials that keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure and to protect small babies when outdoors.
- Consider the use of mosquito repellent, according to directions, when it is necessary to be outdoors.

The CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state. Mosquito traps are set Monday through Thursday nights at each site every ten days on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES website at <http://www.ct.gov/caes/mosquitotesting>.

For information on West Nile virus and how to prevent mosquito bites, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito.

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