

August 6, 2013

WNV & EEE



With the cooler weather fast approaching, mosquitoes are still present and a threat. Please be aware before you head out to take a few simple steps to keep from getting bit by mosquitoes. Every year we face an increased risk of two different viruses that are spread through bites by infected mosquitoes — West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). These mosquito-borne illnesses can cause serious health problems. People, especially those over 50 and /or immunocompromised, should be strongly encouraged to use repellent and cover up to reduce mosquito bites.

WNV infected mosquitoes have been found in Barnstable, Berkshire, Bristol, Dukes, Essex, Hampshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk counties. These geographically widespread findings indicated that virus is circulating throughout the Commonwealth and is not confined to municipalities where infected mosquitoes have been found. Residents are encouraged to practice source reductions.

The Identification of EEE infected mammal-biting mosquitoes in Amherst and the death of a horse in Belchertown from EEE indicate that area as having an elevated risk from EEE.

Although few EEE infected mosquitoes have been identified so far this year, residents in areas that have seen EEE activity previously should be encouraged to practice good personal preventive behaviors to avoid mosquito bites. These areas include parts of Essex County, all of Bristol and Plymouth Counties, the area around Orange and Athol, the area around Belchertown and Amherst, and Pittsfield.

The good news is that you can avoid mosquito bites and "mosquito-proof" your home today.

- Use bug sprays that contain DEET, permethrin, IR3535 or picaridin (KBR 3023) to provides protection against mosquitoes. In addition, oil of lemon eucalyptus has been found to provide as much protection as low concentrations of DEET.
- Avoid wearing perfume or scented products.
- Take special care to cover up the arms and legs of children playing outdoors.

- When you take a baby outdoors, cover the baby's carriage or playpen with mosquito netting.
- Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that take place during evening or early morning hours. That's prime time for mosquito bites.
- Fix any holes in your screens and make sure they are tightly attached to all your doors and windows.
- Be sure not to dump trash, leaves, or grass clippings into streams or drains, so that water will flow freely.
- Remove sources of standing water around your home. Mosquitoes will begin to breed in any puddle or standing water that lasts for more than four days. Check gutters, ceramic pots, trash cans, recycling containers, old tires, wading pools, bird baths, watering dishes for pets, swimming pools, children's outdoor toys, etc.

The Norfolk County Mosquito Control staff continues to spray the areas of Foxborough on a weekly basis. If you have a particularly troublesome mosquito problem in your area you can call them at 781-762-3681.

Check out our website for further information at www.foxboroughma.gov
Under Foxborough HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

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