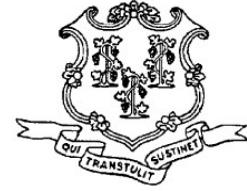


News



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Health Officials Warn of High Mosquito Activity After Recent Period of Heavy Rains

West Nile Virus on Decline But Continues to Be a Threat

Hartford – The State Mosquito Management Program today advised Connecticut residents that mosquito activity is high and to continue to guard against mosquito bites to prevent West Nile virus infection.

“As a direct result of the heavy rains and subsequent flooding that occurred with the passing of the last tropical storm, we continue to collect a very high number of floodwater mosquitoes at many locations throughout the state,” said Theodore G. Andreadis, Ph.D., Chief Medical Entomologist with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. “While West Nile virus activity is on the decline, these mosquitoes are aggressive human biters and intense biting activity is likely to continue for the next week or so as long as the mild weather continues.”

“In previous years, we have had people become ill with WNV infection in October so it is important that Connecticut residents take this threat seriously,” said Department of Public Health Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A. “West Nile virus will continue to be a threat until the weather turns cold enough to end the mosquito season and taking the recommended personal protective measures to avoid mosquito bites is the most effective way to prevent mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile virus.”

Seven human cases of WNV infections have been identified including residents of Bridgeport (2), Fairfield, Greenwich, Sherman, and Stamford (2). None of the infections have been fatal.

So far this year, positive mosquitoes have been identified at 33 locations in 25 towns – Branford, Bridgeport, Darien, East Haven, Fairfield, Glastonbury, Greenwich, Hamden, Hartford, Middlefield, Milford, Monroe, New Britain, New Canaan, New Haven, Norwalk, Shelton, South Windsor, Stamford, Stonington, Stratford, West Haven, Westport, Wethersfield, and Wilton.

To avoid mosquito bites and reduce mosquito breeding, Connecticut residents are asked to take the following measures:

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 and always use them 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 (for example, 6% lasts approximately 2 hours and 20% for 4 hours) 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 2 months.

Measures to reduce mosquitoes around the home include:

- Dispose of water-holding containers, such as ceramic pots, used tires, 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 bird baths on a weekly basis
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, and when not in use, pool covers
- Use landscaping techniques to eliminate areas where water can collect on your property

Additional resources for information include:

- The Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Website at www.ct.gov/mosquito
- The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Web site at www.ct.gov/caes
- The Department of Environmental Protection Web site at www.ct.gov/dep
- The Department of Agriculture Web site at www.ct.gov/doag
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at www.cdc.gov

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