



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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PRESS RELEASE

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State Reports Positive Mosquitoes for West Nile Virus in New Canaan

First WNV-Positive Mosquito Pool of Season

New Haven – The State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program (MMP) announced that mosquitoes trapped in New Canaan on June 19 tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These results represent the first WNV positive mosquitoes identified in the state by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) this year. Connecticut residents are reminded to protect themselves from mosquito bites and mosquito-borne diseases.

“The first West Nile virus positive mosquitoes of the season have been identified,” said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. “This is one of the earlier detections of virus recorded during the last 20 years of the statewide monitoring program.”

“We’ll continue to closely monitor mosquitoes for early virus amplification” said Dr. Theodore Andreadis, Director of the CAES. “The recent rainfall and warm weather forecast for this weekend and beyond are expected to increase mosquito activity and build-up of West Nile virus. We encourage everyone to take simple measures such as wearing mosquito repellent and covering bare skin, especially during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.”

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

- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.

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- 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 of time, or when mosquitoes are more 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.

West Nile virus has been detected in the state every year since 1999. Last year, CAES trapped and tested nearly 200,000 mosquitoes and identified WNV-positive mosquitoes at trap sites in 30 towns in 6 counties (Fairfield, Hartford, Middlesex, New Haven, New London, and Windham). Three Connecticut residents were diagnosed and hospitalized due to WNV infection. Since 2000, 134 human cases of WNV have been diagnosed in Connecticut residents including 3 fatalities.

Connecticut Mosquito Management Program

The response to mosquito transmitted diseases in Connecticut is a collaborative inter-agency effort involving the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Pathobiology at the University of Connecticut (UCONN). These agencies are responsible for monitoring mosquito populations and the potential public health threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

The CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state. CAES begins mosquito trapping and testing in June and continues into October. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES website at <http://www.ct.gov/caes/mosquitotesting>.

For information on WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases, what can be done to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes, the latest mosquito test results and human infections, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito.

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