



Increased West Nile Virus Activity throughout CT

Public Health
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The Connecticut River Area Health District (CRAHD) is advising Haddam residents to be aware of a rapid build-up of West Nile Virus (WNV) activity within the state. Recent tests show that infected mosquitoes are rising at levels higher than normal for this time of year.

To date the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has detected WNV-infected mosquitoes in numerous municipalities this year including Haddam.

The current warm weather and high humidity are providing ideal conditions for mosquitoes and intensification of West Nile Virus. These conditions lead to an increased risk of human infection that will likely continue from now until the end of September.

The CRAHD is urging Haddam residents to follow these very important measures:

Mosquitoes require water for reproduction. The following are measures that can help reduce mosquitoes:

- Elimination of standing water suitable for mosquitoes. 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 bird baths on a weekly basis.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools. When pools are not in use, use pool covers and drain when necessary.

Mosquitoes require a blood meal for reproduction. The following are measures that can help reduce bites from mosquitoes that feed on people:

- Be particularly careful at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long-sleeved shirts. Clothing material should be tightly woven.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors.
- Consider the use of CDC- recommended mosquito repellents, containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, IR3535, or 2-undecanone, and apply according to directions, when it is necessary to be outdoors.
- When using DEET, use the lowest concentration effective for the time spent outdoors (for example, 6 percent lasts approximately two hours and 20 percent for four 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 two months old.

- Also, be sure door and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair to avoid mosquito bites when indoors.

In CT we are fortunate to have the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program (CMMP). The CMMP is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Agriculture, the University of Connecticut Department of Pathobiology and Veterinary Science, and Local Health Districts and departments.

For the most current and updated mosquito/WNV information please visit the CMMP website at: <http://www.ct.gov/mosquito/site/default.asp>

Haddam residents may wonder about WNV and their pets. After all, they are a very important part of our families. Fortunately, most pets have a fantastic resistance to developing WNV disease and very rarely die if they become infected. The exception would be horses as they are extremely susceptible to WNV and have high mortality rates. The following link is an informative resource for pet owners:

https://www.ok.gov/health/Disease%2C_Prevention%2C_Preparedness/Acute_Disease_Service/Disease_Information/Tickborne_and_Mosquitoborne_Diseases/West_Nile_Virus/West_Nile_Virus_Pet_Owner_Questions_and_Answers.html

Enjoy your summer and the outdoors but please do your part around your home to reduce mosquito breeding and protect yourself when you are outdoors particularly in the evening. In addition, we urge Haddam residents to call if they observe large accumulations of standing water (ex. unused swimming pools with stagnant water) on their neighbors' property. During the mosquito breeding season these accumulations of standing water are a violation of the CT Public Health Code and will be appropriately enforced if reported.

If you have any additional questions, please call the CRAHD at 860-661-3300.

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CT River Area Health District

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