

News



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Seasonal West Nile Activity Waning but Threat Remains

Residents urged to continue to take precautions to prevent mosquito bites

Hartford – The State Mosquito Management Program reminds residents to take steps to prevent mosquito bites as West Nile virus (WNV) is present in Connecticut. So far this season, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has identified WNV infected mosquitoes in Fairfield, Hartford, Litchfield, New Haven and New London counties.

“The number of affected towns continues to increase,” said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. “While early- to mid-August is when the number of positive mosquito pools typically peaks, the peak this season appears to have been delayed with continued risk of transmission to people through September.”

As of September 10, WNV has been detected in 52 mosquito pools including above average positive pools during the last reporting week ending September 6. The 14 towns with WNV-positive mosquito pools include Bridgeport (9), Cornwall (1), Danbury (2), Darien (2), East Haven (3), Groton (1), Hartford (2), New Britain (1), New Haven (2), Norwalk (1), Stamford (6), Stratford (20), West Hartford (1), and Wethersfield (1).

One person, a Bridgeport resident, has been reported with WNV-associated illnesses acquired in Connecticut this season. The person, 40-49 years, became ill during the 3rd week of August, was hospitalized with WNV-associated meningitis and is recovering. Illness was characterized by high fever, severe headache and blurred vision. During 2013, four Connecticut residents developed WNV-associated illnesses, none were fatal.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus, another mosquito borne virus often found in the northeast has not been detected in Connecticut this year.

“This season Connecticut has been fortunate to have only moderate levels of WNV infected mosquitoes. But mosquitoes may remain active well into September and insect-borne illness remains a threat,” said Dr. Jewel Mullen, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health. “I ask everyone to prevent mosquito bites by using insect repellent and covering bare skin, especially during dusk when mosquitoes are most active.”

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

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