



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State Reclamation & Mosquito Control Board
CENTRAL MASS. MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT
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Mosquito Collection in Millbury Tests Positive for West Nile Virus

On July 16, 2008 the Mass. Dept. of Public Health (MDPH) confirmed that a collection of *Culex* mosquitoes collected on July 1 tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The Central Mass. Mosquito Control Project has coordinated with the Millbury Board of Health and will place additional surveillance traps in the area the mosquitoes were found. Mammal-biting species of mosquitoes from these traps will be sent into MDPH in Jamaica Plain to be tested for virus. CMMCP records show that catch basins in that area have been already treated to reduce the larval population of *Culex* species and other mosquito species that prefer these areas for larval development. No wide-area spraying in this area is planned at this time.

This year 2 collections of mosquitoes in Brookline have tested positive for West Nile Virus, and mosquitoes collected on June 27 in Worcester have also been confirmed positive with WNV. In 2007, there were six human cases of WNV in Massachusetts. While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe disease. WNV is usually spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito.

“This species of mosquito is not likely to bite humans, but this confirmation reminds us that the virus is present in the environment, and we must do everything possible to avoid mosquito bites” said CMMCP Executive Director, Timothy Deschamps. “You can help reduce mosquito populations around your home and neighborhood by emptying any containers that collect water. Please use repellents according to label directions if you are outside in areas of high numbers of mosquitoes”.

Personal protection measures have an important role to play in monitoring for WNV and protecting yourself and your loved ones.

Avoid Mosquito Bites – Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours – The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning. Otherwise, take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing.

Clothing Can Help Reduce Mosquito Bites. Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

Apply Insect Repellent When You Go Outdoors. Use a repellent with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), or oil of lemon eucalyptus [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home – Drain Standing Water – Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or getting rid of items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools, and change water in birdbaths frequently.

Install or Repair Screens – Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

Report Dead Birds – Dead crows, blue jays or robins may be a sign that WNV is circulating among the birds and mosquitoes in an area. Call 1-866-MASS WNV to report a dead bird. By reporting dead birds, you can play an important role in monitoring WNV.

More information is available on the DPH website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph>. Information about WNV and EEE is also available by calling the DPH recorded information line at 1-866-MASS-WNV (1-866-627-7698).

For more information please call CMMCP at (508) 393-3055 or log on to our website at www.cmmcp.org.

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