



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Mosquitoes Trapped in Vermont Test Positive for West Nile Virus

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Media Contact: Communication Office
Vermont Department of Health
802-863-7281

BURLINGTON – The Vermont Department of Health announced today that mosquitoes from the town of Leicester Junction in Addison County have tested positive for West Nile virus.

“This is the first evidence of West Nile virus in Vermont this year, and the hot, dry weather this summer could mean more mosquitoes may be infected than in the past few years,” said State Epidemiologist Patsy Kelso.

The mosquitoes were captured in a trap set on July 27. No human cases of West Nile Virus in Vermont have been confirmed since 2003. The state tests dead birds, traps and tests mosquitoes, and tests people and horses that have symptoms consistent with the virus.

The Health Department recommends that people take precautions to avoid mosquito bites, since the virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito.

The Department of Health is reminding Vermonters to:

- Wear long sleeves and pants and avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are active.
- Reduce mosquito breeding habitats by getting rid of standing water, and by draining areas where water can pool such as rain gutters, wading pools, and old tires.
- Use repellents containing no more than 30 percent DEET for adults and no more than 10 percent for children age 3 and older.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.

Symptoms of West Nile virus are often mild, but can include high fever. Approximately 1 percent of people who are infected develop severe illness affecting the central nervous system, such as encephalitis or meningitis, which can be fatal.

The Health Department and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets are also on the lookout for another mosquito-borne virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus, which has been found in neighboring states and Quebec.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit the Vermont Department of Health website: healthvermont.gov.

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Vermont Department of Health | 108 Cherry Street | Burlington, VT 05402
Voice: 802-863-7200 | In Vermont 800-464-4343 | Fax: 802-865-7754 | TTY/TDD: Dial 711 first
Health Care Provider Infectious Disease Reporting: 802-863-7240 or 800-640-4374
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