



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



First Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported in Vermont This Season



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BURLINGTON –The Vermont Department of Health confirmed today the first human illness due to West Nile virus infection this year. A Lamoille County resident became ill in early August and has since recovered.

West Nile virus was also detected in a horse in Lamoille County, and the animal was euthanized on Aug. 19.

In 2012, three people were confirmed to have West Nile virus from Rutland, Essex and Franklin Counties. This season, the virus has been detected in mosquito pools in Brandon, Fairfax, Leicester, Pittsford, Shoreham, Rutland and Whiting. Mosquito surveillance is limited to southern Addison, northern Rutland and Franklin counties this year. West Nile virus activity has been seen in every county since it was first detected in 2000, with the peak of activity in late August and early September.

While most people who become infected do not become ill, about 20 percent experience a flu-like illness, and fewer than 1 percent develop a more severe illness that affects the nervous system. Symptoms of West Nile virus typically include high fever, muscle aches, headache and fatigue. When the nervous system is involved, symptoms may include a stiff neck and a severe headache.

Fight the Bite:

There's still a month or more of mosquito season left, so the Health Department continues to encourage Vermonters to take action to prevent mosquito-borne illness like West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis, no matter where you live in the state.

- Reduce mosquito breeding habitats by getting rid of standing water, and drain areas where water can pool such as rain gutters, wading pools and old tires.
- Wear long sleeves and pants and avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are active.
- Use insect repellents that are safe and effective against mosquitoes. Products with a registration number from the Environmental Protection Agency on the label have been evaluated for safety and effectiveness. Repellents containing DEET in concentrations up to 30%, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 are effective against mosquito bites.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.
- Horses, alpacas and llamas are also susceptible to West Nile virus infection. There is a vaccine available for horses, which can also be used in alpacas and llamas. Owners should discuss vaccination with their veterinarian.

For more information on mosquito-borne illness visit: <http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/arbovirus/index.aspx>

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