



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



More Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Detected in Mosquito Pools; Limited Aerial Spraying Planned for Aug. 22 & 27

Health Department urges Vermonters to take action to fight the bite.



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BURLINGTON – Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus has been detected in mosquitoes from four more mosquito pools collected on August 10 and 12 in the swampy area of Whiting in southern Addison County. This brings the total to five detections in mosquito pools from the same area. West Nile virus has also been detected in mosquitoes collected in Whiting and in Brandon.

Weather permitting, aerial spraying of the pesticide Anvil 10+10 (Sumithrin) for the Whiting area is being planned by Health and Agriculture officials in coordination with local officials and the Agency of Natural Resources.

The area to be treated is limited to a two mile radius centered around the swampy area north of Stickney Road in Whiting. This area is sparsely populated. The spraying operation will be managed by the Agency of Agriculture.

The treatment is planned for Thursday, August 22 and again on Tuesday, August 27 from dusk to approximately 11 p.m. The pesticide will be sprayed in very low volume concentrations from a fixed-wing aircraft. In case of rain, the operation could be postponed.

“These newest detections only intensify our recommendations to Vermonters to fight the bite, no matter where you live,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “We can’t kill every mosquito, but targeted spraying may knock back the local population of mosquitoes that are carrying the EEE virus. Spraying could reduce risk of infection, but it’s still important that we all take precautions against mosquito bites.”

The Health Department is alerting local officials, area residents and health care providers about the spraying operation, and any precautions to take. A map and more information about spraying and precautions for people and animals will be available at: http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/arbovirus/mosquito_spraying.aspx, www.vermontagriculture.com, or dial 2-1-1, United Ways of Vermont.

EEE is a rare but serious and often fatal disease. Nationally, about six people every year are diagnosed with the illness. EEE was detected in mosquitoes for the first time in the state in 2012, and two people became ill and died. In September 2012, the State conducted this type of aerial spraying of the areas around the Whiting and Brandon swamps. The Whiting area sprayed in 2012 is the same area that will be sprayed, with the same pesticide, this year.

Significant EEE activity has only been detected in the southern Addison and northern Rutland counties region, but it’s likely the virus is present in other parts of the state. West Nile virus, which generally causes milder illness, has been documented since 2000 and over the years has been detected in every county in Vermont.

Both viruses are spread to humans and some animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. Neither can be spread from contact with birds, animals or people. To date in 2013, no illness from either West Nile virus or EEE has been reported in animals or in people.

Take Action to Fight the Bite:

Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants outside when mosquitoes are active.

Use insect repellents labeled as being effective against mosquitoes. Effective ingredients are DEET, picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus.

Cover baby carriages or outdoor play spaces with mosquito netting.

Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.

Take extra precautions at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active and biting.

Reduce mosquito breeding habitats by getting rid of standing water and draining areas where water can pool – such as rain gutters, wading pools and old tires.

The Agency of Agriculture reminds owners of West Nile virus and EEE-susceptible species, including horses, llamas and alpacas, to talk with their veterinarian about vaccinating their animals. Both illnesses can cause severe neurologic disease and death in these species. Emus are susceptible to EEE and can be vaccinated with the equine vaccine.

For extensive information about EEE and West Nile virus and the 2013 Arbovirus Surveillance & Response Plan, go to www.healthvermont.gov.

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