



BETHEL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Public Health Advisory

The State Mosquito Management Program today announced that mosquitoes trapped in Bethel, Bridgeport, Meriden, Norwalk and Orange from July 22-27, 2010 have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These are the first positive mosquitoes identified in these five towns by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) this year. Positive mosquitoes continue to be identified at sites in Stamford and West Haven. There have been no confirmed human WNV infections reported this season so far.

“Circulation of West Nile virus in mosquitoes continues to intensify,” said Theodore G. Andreadis, Ph.D., Chief Medical Entomologist, CAES. “Over the next several weeks, we will probably see infected mosquitoes in more Fairfield County towns and in other Connecticut counties as well. ***Today’s announcement regarding West Nile virus positive mosquitoes underscores the importance for Connecticut residents to take necessary precautions to prevent mosquito bites.***” “In previous years, most West Nile virus infections were acquired during August and September. Residents should remain vigilant and can prevent West Nile Virus and mosquito bites by using personal protection measures, and implementing environmental strategies to prevent standing water and mosquito breeding on residential properties.

The following personal precautions are advised:

- If you must be outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active, wear long sleeve shirts and long pants.
- Use insect repellent when outdoors and use them according to label instructions.
- When using DEET (the active ingredient) on children, use a product containing less than 10% DEET and wash treated skin after returning indoors or follow pediatrician guidance

The following environmental measures are advised to help reduce mosquitoes around the home and property:

- Dispose of water-holding containers, such as ceramic pots, used tires, tire swings
- Clean clogged roof gutters
- Turn over objects that may trap water when not in use such as wading pools and wheelbarrows, change bird bath water every 7 days with new water.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, and when pools are covered do not let standing water accumulate
- Use landscaping to eliminate areas where water can collect on your property
- Use of BTI biological dunks in stagnant standing water that cannot be eliminated prevents mosquitoes from breeding in that stagnant water.

Bethel has a comprehensive larviciding program implemented by a larviciding company who distributes larvicide (BTI) to lessen the number of mosquitoes around high volume public areas including public grounds, schools, catch basins, and road drainage ditches.

The Bethel Health Department staff can be reached at 203.794-8539.