

News



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Reports Mosquitoes Positive for West Nile Virus in Greenwich

Hartford – The State Mosquito Management Program today announced that mosquitoes trapped in Greenwich on July 15, 2008 have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These are the first WNV-positive mosquitoes identified in Greenwich by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) this year.

So far this summer, positive mosquitoes have been identified in five towns – Bridgeport, Greenwich, Milford, Stamford and Stonington, and a resident of Sherman has tested positive for WNV infection. The infected mosquito species trapped in Greenwich was *Culex pipiens*, a common mosquito species found in residential areas and one of the species that is responsible for spreading WNV in Connecticut. During 2007, WNV was identified in mosquitoes in 18 towns.

“The isolations of West Nile virus from mosquitoes in five towns are a clear indication that the virus activity is rapidly intensifying across the state,” said Theodore G. Andreadis, Ph.D., Chief Medical Entomologist, CAES. “We are seeing levels of virus in July that we do not usually experience until August and with current weather conditions, we anticipate further build-up in the coming weeks. “We will continue to monitor mosquitoes through the summer and fall and ask property owners to reduce mosquito breeding areas.”

To monitor WNV, the CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state from June through October. Mosquito traps are set every ten days at each site on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date.

“With the announcement last week of a Sherman resident with WNV and mosquito pools in two Connecticut towns with mosquitoes testing positive for the virus this week, people should take precautions to avoid mosquito bites,” stated Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH, MBA. “It is important to know that mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk, and that simple measures like long pants, long-sleeved shirts, head coverings and socks together with insect repellent will minimize exposure to mosquitoes which may carry the virus.”

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For information on West Nile virus and what you can do to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes and reduce mosquito breeding areas, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito.

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