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www.ccthd.org

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Health District Announces Start of Mosquito Testing Program

The Central Connecticut Health District is announcing the resumption of mosquito monitoring by the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program. As in previous years, mosquitoes will be collected around the State to detect the presence of viruses that can cause illness in people, such as West Nile Virus (WNV) and eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). The mosquito trapping and testing program, coordinated by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, began May 31st. As in the past several years, mosquitoes will be trapped and tested from 91 trap sites in 72 municipalities around the state. Two of those sites are within the Central CT Health District, one in Newington and the other in Wethersfield. In 2010, eleven Connecticut residents were identified with WNV infections, fortunately no deaths were reported.

To minimize the risk of acquiring a mosquito-borne illness, residents are urged to take steps to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. These steps include the following personal protection and environmental measures:

- Avoid outdoor activities one hour before and one hour after dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors; it is especially important to cover the arms and legs of children.
- No product containing DEET should be used on infants less than 2 months old.
- Cover babies' playpens and carriages with mosquito netting when outdoors.
- Avoid camping near fresh water swamps and use mosquito netting in tents.
- Stay indoors when mosquitoes are numerous.
- Eliminate sources of standing water such as stagnant ponds, ditches, flower pots and old tires, as mosquito only needs a few tablespoons of water to lay eggs. Drain children's pools, clean clogged gutters, and flush birdbaths and fountains once or twice a week. Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, and any similar containers that have accumulated on your property, and drill holes in the bottoms of recycling and garbage containers that are left outside.
- Make sure your property is graded properly and has adequate drainage. Look for places where rainwater collects and fill all holes and depressions. Mosquitoes will breed in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days.
- Store boats, wheelbarrows, and containers upside down. If you have a pond, be sure it is aerated or stocked with fish such as goldfish and minnows, which eat mosquito larvae.
- Patch holes in screens and make sure screens are tightly attached to doors and windows.
- Use low toxicity insecticides and always follow the directions on the products. When applying sprays, be sure to keep the wind at your back, carry the spray away from you, and avoid personal contact with it and excessive inhalation of spray materials.
- Place bat houses on your property.

Anyone with questions or concerns about mosquito control, WNV, or any public health issue may contact the Central Connecticut Health District, celebrating 15 years of community service, at **www.ccthd.org** (860-721-2822) or The Connecticut Department of Public Health at www.ct.gov/mosquito. Brochures about mosquito control and West Nile Virus also are available from the Central CT Health District.

Additional information about mosquito control can also be obtained from the CT Department of Environmental Protection at **www.ct.gov/dep**, the CT Agricultural Experiment Station at **www.ct.gov.caes**, and the CT Dept. of Agriculture at **www.ct.gov/doag**. Inquiries about pesticide-related subjects are handled through the National Pesticide Information Center at 1-800-858-7378.