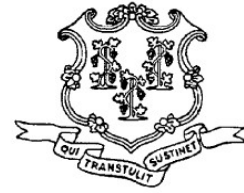


News



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State Mosquito Program Kicks Off Mosquito Testing for West Nile and Eastern Equine Encephalitis Viruses

Hartford – The State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program is again monitoring mosquitoes for the presence of viruses that can cause illness in people including West Nile virus (WNV) and eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEE). The mosquito trapping and testing program, coordinated by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), began May 31st. Reporting test results will begin this week.

“Protecting yourself from mosquito bites will help prevent West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne diseases,” said Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Jewel Mullen. “Taking simple steps, like using bug repellent, wearing protective clothing and staying indoors during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active can make a big difference in preventing mosquito bites,” she stated.

“We are currently experiencing unusually high numbers of mosquitoes throughout the state due to last winter’s snowfall and excessive spring rains,” said Dr. Theodore Andreadis, Chief Medical Entomologist, CAES. “With additional flooding and arrival of warm weather we expect this trend to continue for several weeks.”

In 2010, eleven Connecticut residents were identified with WNV infections. In addition, last year WNV-positive mosquitoes were trapped in 24 municipalities and EEE-positive mosquitoes were trapped in one town.

Monitoring and risk assessment for WNV emphasizes mosquito trapping and testing results. The CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state. Mosquito traps are set Monday – Thursday nights with trapping conducted at each site every ten days on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date. Positive findings are reported to local health departments, in press releases and on the CAES web site.

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

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