

Get out and enjoy the outdoors, but protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites.

The recent rains and hot weather have increased mosquito populations around the state. Now is the time to take action to help reduce mosquito populations around your home and neighborhood and to make personal precautions a habit. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) announced on July 2nd that West Nile virus (WNV) had been detected in a mosquito for the first time this year. The mosquito sample was collected on June 27 in the city of Worcester. The City of Methuen's mosquito surveillance program tests weekly for WNV and has not detected the virus this year. The City encourages people to protect themselves and be proactive in preventing WNV and other mosquito transmitted diseases.

Everyone has an important role to play in protecting themselves and their loved ones from illnesses caused by mosquitoes.

Avoid Mosquito Bites:

- **Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours.** The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning. Otherwise, take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing.
- **Clothing Can Help Reduce Mosquito Bites.** Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.
- **Apply Insect Repellent when you go outdoors.** Use a repellent with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), oil of lemon eucalyptus [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] or IR3535 (as contained in Skin-So-Soft Bug Guard Plus IR3535®) according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- **Drain Standing Water.** Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or getting rid of items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools, and change water in birdbaths frequently.
- **Install or Repair Screens.** Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

Sincerely,

The City of Methuen

More information is available at: www.mass.gov/dph/wnv/wnv1.htm. Information about WNV and EEE is also available by calling the DPH recorded information line at 1-866-MASS-WNV (1-866-627-7698), or the Epidemiology Program at 617-983-6800.