

TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Press Release

State Mosquito Monitoring Underway

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The State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program has announced that the seasonal mosquito trapping and testing program coordinated by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) began on June 5th. The program monitors the types, numbers and locations of mosquitoes and tests them for the presence of viruses that can cause illness including West Nile virus (WNV), Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus (EEE) and Zika virus. First test results will be available starting mid-June. There are 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout Connecticut, including one in Killingworth.

Mosquito breeding picks up as the weather warms. According to the CAES, WNV infected mosquitoes are historically identified early to mid-July each year while EEE is not expected until later in the summer. CAES has indicated that it is unlikely that Zika infected mosquitoes will be identified but they will be testing for it. According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the current threat of Zika virus infections among Connecticut residents is the result of travel to Zika affected areas and sexual transmission from infected men to their partners, not from local mosquito transmission.

Last season, CAES trapped and tested over 170,000 mosquitoes and identified WNV-positive mosquitoes collected at trap sites in 20 towns in 4 counties (Fairfield, Hartford, New Haven and New London).

How can I protect myself and my family?

- Empty standing water from plastic containers, ceramic pots, tires or similar water holding containers that may be on your property. Mosquitoes only need a few tablespoons of water to lay eggs.
- Clean clogged roof gutters on an annual basis, particularly if the leaves from surrounding trees have a tendency to plug up the drains. Roof gutters are easily overlooked but can produce millions of mosquitoes each season.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use. A wading pool becomes a mosquito producer if it is not used on a regular basis.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and do not allow water to stagnate in bird baths. Change water in bird baths and wading pools on a weekly basis.

- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish. Water gardens are fashionable but become major mosquito producers if they are allowed to stagnate.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools that are not being used. A swimming pool that is left untended by a family that goes on vacation for a month can produce a significant amount of mosquitoes. Be aware that mosquitoes also breed in the water that collects on swimming pool covers, boat covers and tarps.
- Place bat houses on your property.

Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property. Mosquitoes can develop in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days during the summer.

Bug zappers are not recommended. They attract few mosquitoes and may actually kill beneficial insect predators.

For more information on WNV and EEE, what can be done to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes, and the latest mosquito test results and human infections, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program web site at www.ct.gov/mosquito. For more information on Zika virus, please visit www.ct.gov/zika.

Please contact the Killingworth Health Department at (860) 663-1765 x223 should you have any questions or need any additional information.

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