



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## State Reports Positive Mosquitoes for West Nile Virus in Four Connecticut Towns *First WNV-Positive Mosquito Pools of Season*

**New Haven** – The State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program (MMP) announced that mosquitoes trapped in Darien, Fairfield, New Haven, and Stamford on July 18 and 19 tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These results represent the first WNV positive mosquitoes identified in the state by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) this year. Connecticut residents are reminded to protect themselves from mosquito bites and mosquito-borne diseases.

“The first West Nile virus positive mosquitoes of the season have been identified,” said Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. “The current warm weather and high humidity provides ideal conditions for mosquito activity and West Nile virus transmission. We anticipate further build-up of the virus from now through September.”

“We will continue to closely monitor mosquitoes for continued virus amplification,” said Dr. Jason White, Director of the CAES. “We encourage everyone to take precautionary measures, such as wearing mosquito repellent and covering bare skin, especially during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.”

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes, residents should:

- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight-fitting and in good repair.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods of time, or when mosquitoes are more active. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven materials that keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure and to protect infants when outdoors.

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- Consider the use of an EPA-approved mosquito repellent and apply according to directions when it is necessary to be outdoors.

West Nile virus has been detected in Connecticut every year since it was introduced into North America in 1999. Last season, WNV was detected in 208 mosquito pools from 43 towns among all eight Connecticut counties. Six confirmed human cases of WNV infection were also reported from Fairfield, Hartford, and New Haven Counties.

### **Connecticut Mosquito Management Program**

The response to mosquito transmitted diseases in Connecticut is a collaborative inter-agency effort involving the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Pathobiology at the University of Connecticut (UCONN). These agencies are responsible for monitoring mosquito populations and the potential public health threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

The CAES maintains a network of 108 mosquito-trapping stations in 88 municipalities throughout the state. CAES begins mosquito trapping and testing in June and continues into October. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES website at <https://portal.ct.gov/caes>.

For information on WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases, what can be done to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes, the latest mosquito test results, and human infections, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program web site at <https://portal.ct.gov/mosquito>.

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