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WESTCHESTER COUNTY'S SPRING S.T.I.N.G. WEEKEND DECLARED A SUCCESS

Over the weekend of June 8th – 10th, 335 registered volunteers, along with other countless individual residents, banded together in a collaborative effort to fight West Nile virus in Westchester County by ridding their communities of potential mosquito breeding grounds.

Dubbed as “Spring S.T.I.N.G. Weekend,” a joint effort of the Westchester County Department of Health and Citizens Campaign for the Environment, 33 community based organizations signed-on to partner with the County in this massive mosquito control initiative. Participating groups took part by distributing nearly 3,500 publicity flyers prior to the event, as well as by taking to the streets throughout the weekend to clean-up sources of standing water that could serve as mosquito breeding sites.

“Spring S.T.I.N.G. Weekend was a wonderful opportunity for residents to get involved and take pride in their communities while, at the same time, emphasizing the point that integrated pest management does work,” said Joshua Lipsman, M.D., M.P.H., Westchester County Commissioner of Health. “A testament to this fact is that over the course of the weekend, residents bought nearly 500 tires, amounting to 5.13 tons, to the County’s Tire Recycling Center for proper disposal. This effort is particularly noteworthy because used tires have become the most common breeding ground for mosquitoes that are known to carry West Nile virus,” added Dr. Lipsman.

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Additional activities that were undertaken by Spring S.T.I.N.G. participants to eliminate mosquito breeding sites included: Getting rid of water holding containers that were left outdoors, such as cans, bottles, buckets and drums; covering outdoor trash containers and recycling bins that were capable of collecting rain water; cleaning debris from roof gutters to ensure the proper drainage of rain water; draining the water from outdoor flower trays and birdbaths; and filling in hollow tree stumps with either sand or cement to prevent their use as mosquito breeding areas.

Community organizations that took part in Spring S.T.I.N.G. Weekend included: The Fleetwood Neighborhood Association of Mount Vernon; The Kingsbridge Garden Association of Mount Vernon; Greyston in Yonkers; The White Plains YWCA; The Westchester Community Opportunities Program; Sierra Club; Hudson Valley Bank; The Child Care Council; The Westchester Children's Association; The Westchester County Department of Parks and Recreation; as well as numerous Boy and Girl Scout Troops throughout the County. These groups worked to eliminate sources of standing water in their cities and towns, as well as teamed up to perform a substantial clean-up effort along the Hutchinson River Parkway from Mt. Vernon to Pelham

For additional information about West Nile virus control and prevention, call the Health Department's West Nile Virus Information Line at (914) 813-5609, or visit the Department's website at www.westchestergov.com/health.