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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COUNTY TO HOST SPRING S.T.I.N.G WEEKEND &
HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL CLEAN-UP DAYS ON MAY 2 & 3**

Clean up your property and help in the fight against the West Nile virus by participating in two simultaneous clean-up events on May 2 & 3: Westchester County's Spring S.T.I.N.G. Weekend and Household Chemical Clean-Up Days.

In conjunction with Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Westchester County is urging residents to eliminate potential mosquito breeding grounds on their properties to prevent West Nile virus and bring their old tires, household chemicals and non-working computers and televisions to Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park in Yorktown on Friday May 2, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday, May 3, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"This is an opportunity to spruce up your home and to help your community," said County Executive Andy Spano. "Old tires, when left outside, are popular breeding grounds for mosquitoes that can carry the West Nile virus. Many common household chemicals, when not disposed of properly, end up polluting our water."

With May 3rd also designated as "No Pesticides Day" in Westchester County, Spring S.T.I.N.G. Weekend and Household Chemical Cleanup Days go a long way in demonstrating the fact that there are alternatives to using pesticides to curb the mosquito population and safe methods for disposing of these chemicals.

In addition to pesticides, a variety of household chemicals, computer monitors and TVs (which have tubes containing a high level of lead) will also be accepted at F.D.R. State Park. Household Chemical Clean-Up Days are also ideal opportunities to properly dispose of household devices that contain mercury. For instance, mercury fever thermometers are still a very common item in many households. They pose a significant risk to

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people and to the environment because they are very easy to break and very difficult to clean up. To encourage residents to get rid of these thermometers, old mercury fever thermometers can be traded in at Household Chemical Clean-Up events for new, mercury-free thermometers (one per person, while supplies last). Other mercury containing devices that will be accepted for disposal include barometers, thermostats and mercury switches.

To request a flyer on Household Chemical Clean-Up Days, which includes directions to the sites and a list of acceptable items, and to gain more information on how to safely and responsibly dispose of many special items year-round, call the County's Household Chemical Info Line at (914) 813-5425 or log on to www.westchestergov.com.

Residents can also pitch in and help their communities in the fight against West Nile virus by participating in clean-up activities. Here are some suggestions from the County's Health Department:

- Organize a neighborhood cleanup squad and work as a group to remove breeding areas from around the neighborhood.
- Report large areas of standing water that can serve as mosquito breeding grounds to the Health Department through its Public Health Information Line at 813-5609.

The Health Department also offers the following suggestions for eliminating mosquito breeding grounds from around private homes and property:

- Get rid of all water holding containers, especially old tires, cans, buckets, drums, wheelbarrows and bottles.
- Cover all outdoor trash containers to keep rainwater from accumulating inside.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of all recycling containers that are left outdoors.
- Clean roof gutters and remove standing water from flat roofs.
- Drain the water in birdbaths, plant pots and drip trays twice weekly.
- Sweep driveways after it rains so that they are free of puddles.

For additional information on West Nile Virus, call the Public Health Information Line at (914) 813-5609, or visit its website at www.westchestergov.com/health.