

ANDREW J. SPANO, Westchester County Executive
JOSHUA LIPSMAN, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner of Health
SUSAN TOLCHIN, Director of Communications

**CONTACT: SUSAN TOLCHIN
MARY LANDRIGAN**

**(914) 995-2932
(914) 813-5013
(914) 813-5000 (After Hours)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 18, 2003

**ONE MORE BATCH OF MOSQUITOS TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS
No Spraying Planned; Surveillance will be increased**

The Westchester County Department of Health has received notification from the New York State Department of Health that one new batch of mosquitoes found in Westchester County has tested positive for West Nile virus. The batch was from the City of Rye and was collected on 7/30/03. This is the fifth batch of mosquitoes found to be positive out of 379 batches that have been tested from Westchester this year. No spraying is planned at this time.

Health Commissioner Dr. Joshua Lipsman said these findings are to be expected at this time of the year. They should serve as a reminder that residents need to take personal protection measures against mosquito bites while in their homes and when spending time outdoors.

“Now is the time to take extra precautions against West Nile virus. Late summer is the peak mosquito season and the time when we begin to see cases of West Nile virus in humans. It is extremely important that residents remain vigilant in their efforts to reduce their risk of West Nile virus,” said Dr. Lipsman.

The Health Department recommends that residents take the following personal protection measures against mosquito bites:

- Avoid being outdoors in places and during times where and when mosquitoes are active and feeding.
- Use insect repellants with no more than 30% DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) when outdoors in such areas at those times. Use 10% or less DEET for children. Do not use DEET on infants. Insect repellants should be used especially at dusk and evening hours when mosquitoes are most likely to bite. Be sure to read and follow the manufacturer’s directions for use.

MORE

WNV POSITIVE MOSQUITO BATCH P.2

- Wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks when outdoors in areas and at times where and when mosquitoes are active and feeding.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

It is also important that residents do their part to reduce potential mosquito breeding sites around their homes. Mosquitoes capable of carrying West Nile virus lay their eggs in stagnant water. The eggs can develop in any pool or puddle of untreated water that stands undisturbed for more than four days. To eliminate possible mosquito breeding grounds, the Health Department recommends doing the following around your home:

- Rid your property of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers
- Remove discarded tires
- Drill holes in the bottoms of all recycling containers that are left outdoors
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use
- Change the water in birdbaths at least twice weekly
- Sweep your driveway after it rains so that it is free of puddles
- Keep storm drains and gutters clear of leaves and debris
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor spas and hot tubs and drain water that collects on their covers.

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