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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MOSQUITO BATCH COLLECTED IN MOUNT VERNON
TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS
No Spraying Planned**

The Westchester County Department of Health has received notification from the New York State Department of Health that a mosquito batch found in Mount Vernon has tested positive for the West Nile virus. The positive mosquito batch was collected for testing on August 7. This is the first West Nile virus positive mosquito batch found in Westchester County this year.

The Health Department will continue with mosquito surveillance efforts throughout the county, as well as in the area where the positive mosquito batch was found. These efforts will include mosquito trapping and testing as well as surveying catch basins for mosquito larvae or standing water. No spraying is planned at this time.

Health Commissioner Dr. Joshua Lipsman said that these findings are not surprising and serve as a reminder that residents need to take personal protection measures against mosquito bites. "It is particularly important that residents remain vigilant in their efforts to reduce their risk of West Nile virus during the late summer months because this is peak mosquito season," said Dr. Lipsman. Dr. Lipsman recommends that residents take the following precautions:

- 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. Products containing DEET are not recommended for use on children under 2 months of age. 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.

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WNV POSITIVE MOSQUITO POOL 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.

“It is also important that residents do their part to reduce potential mosquito breeding sites around their homes,” Dr. Lipsman said. “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,” he warned. The County 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.

Under County Executive Andy Spano's mosquito control program, *Operation Mosquito S.T.I.N.G.* (Stop The Insect's Next Generation), the County has applied larvicide to catch basins countywide to kill immature mosquitoes. Residents who notice large areas of standing water that could serve as potential mosquito breeding grounds should report this information to the Health Department by calling (914) 813-5000 or online through its internet site, www.westchestergov.com/health. Residents should also keep current with research on alternative insect repellents by visiting the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's website at www.cdc.gov.