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**Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County Executive**

## **Attention - Athletes & Spectators**

*Operation Mosquito S.T.I.N.G. is a strategy County Executive Andy Spano put in place to address the West Nile encephalitis outbreak. It is designed to track and control mosquitoes at an early stage to prevent illness due to West Nile virus in residents of Westchester County.*

West Nile encephalitis is an illness transmitted through the bite of a mosquito which becomes infected with the virus by feeding on an infected bird. West Nile encephalitis is a viral infection of the brain caused by West Nile virus, and can be a serious or even fatal illness. Symptoms of West Nile encephalitis include high fever, headache, confusion, muscle aches and weakness, seizures, or paralysis. At its most serious, the infection can result in coma, permanent neurological damage and death. Symptoms usually occur five to 15 days following the bite of an infected mosquito. Because West Nile encephalitis is a viral infection, antibiotics are not effective and there is no specific treatment available.

### **THE BEST WAY TO AVOID WEST NILE ENCEPHALITIS IS TO AVOID MOSQUITO BITES!**

#### **What can you do to reduce your risk of mosquito bites?**

- Wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt -maybe under your uniform- when outdoors for long periods of time.
- Consider the use of mosquito repellent, according to directions, when it is necessary to be outdoors. Frequent application or saturation is not necessary. In fact, use as little as necessary for your situation.
- Use insect repellent with no more than 30% DEET, but use it sparingly and with care. Use 10% or less DEET for children up to five years of age. Infants should not have DEET-containing repellents applied. Products which do not contain DEET may be less effective.
- Do NOT allow young children to apply DEET themselves. Do NOT apply DEET directly to chil-

● Avoid prolonged and excessive use of DEET. Use just enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Do not treat unexposed skin. After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.

### **Mosquito Control In and Around Your Playing Fields and Playgrounds**

Mosquitoes NEED stagnant or standing water to lay their eggs. To reduce the mosquito population around your playing fields, reduce or eliminate all stagnant water.

- Check around your playing fields and playgrounds to remove any water-holding containers, especially tin cans, plastic containers, old tires, buckets, drums, wheelbarrows and bottles.
- Sweep parking lots, pavilions, tennis courts, and basketball courts so they are free of puddles.
- Be sure to empty coolers and water bottles into a drain. Do NOT empty water onto the ground where it can form a puddle.
- Have park officials keep drains, culverts, ponds and streams around your playing fields and playgrounds clean of weeds and trash so that the water will drain properly.
- Have park officials keep the grass cut short and trim the shrubs to eliminate hiding places for adult mosquitoes.
- Have park officials fill in hollow tree stumps and rot holes that hold water with sand or concrete.
- Have park officials drill holes in the bottoms of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.

**For more information, call the West Nile Virus Information Line at (914) 813-5609 or Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000 or visit our website at [www.westchestergov.com/health](http://www.westchestergov.com/health)**