



## *The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station*

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*Putting Science to Work for Society  
Protecting Agriculture, Public Health, and the Environment*

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **West Nile Virus on the Rise in Connecticut**

*Six towns have identified mosquitoes with West Nile virus so far this season*

**New Haven** – The State Mosquito Management Program today announced mosquitoes testing positive for West Nile virus (WNV) have been identified in six towns so far this season. The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) trapped the positive mosquitoes in Darien, Guilford, New Haven, Stamford, West Haven and Waterford. The mosquitoes were trapped from July 20 to July 29, 2015.

“The number of infected mosquitoes and the number of affected towns is increasing” said Dr. Philip Armstrong, Medical Entomologist at the CAES. “We expect to see further build-up of West Nile virus in mosquitoes with increased risk of human infection over the rest of the summer and into early fall.”

“Historically in Connecticut August and September are the months when risk of West Nile virus infection is greatest,” said Dr. Theodore Andreadis, for the Center for Vector Biology & Zoonotic Diseases at the CAES. “We encourage everyone to take steps to prevent mosquito bites, such as using insect repellent and covering bare skin, especially during dusk and dawn when biting mosquitoes are most active.”

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes residents should:

- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight-fitting and in good repair.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods of time, or when mosquitoes are most active. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven materials that keep mosquitoes away from the skin.

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- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure and to protect small babies when outdoors.
- Consider the use of mosquito repellent, according to directions, when it is necessary to be outdoors.

No horses or humans have been reported with WNV-associated illnesses acquired in Connecticut this season. During 2014, 6 Connecticut residents developed WNV-associated illnesses, none were fatal. Since 2000, 120 human cases of WNV-associated illnesses including 3 fatalities have been confirmed in the State.

The State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Agriculture, and the University of Connecticut Department of Pathobiology and Veterinary Science. These agencies are responsible for monitoring the potential public health threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

The CAES maintains a network of 91 mosquito-trapping stations in 72 municipalities throughout the state. Mosquito traps are set Monday – Thursday nights at each site every ten days on a rotating basis. Mosquitoes are grouped (pooled) for testing according to species, collection site, and date. Positive findings are reported to local health departments and on the CAES website at <http://www.ct.gov/caes/mosquitotesting>.

For information on West Nile and eastern equine encephalitis viruses and how to prevent mosquito bites, visit the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program Web site at [www.ct.gov/mosquito](http://www.ct.gov/mosquito).

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