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www.ccthd.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Health District Urges Residents to be Mindful of West Nile Virus

Each year, the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program conducts mosquito monitoring throughout the State. This monitoring, coordinated by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, began on June 1, 2015.

As in previous years, mosquitoes will be collected around the State to detect the presence of viruses that can cause illness in people, such as West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus (EEE). The two collection sites within the Central CT Health District are located at Churchill Park in Newington and Goff Road in Wethersfield.

Mosquitoes will be trapped and tested from 91 trap sites in 72 municipalities around the state. According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), WNV-positive mosquitoes trapped and tested over 200,000 mosquitoes and identified positive mosquitoes at trap sites in 15 towns in 2014. While WNV infections are not usually fatal, patients with meningitis or encephalitis may suffer long lasting symptoms of the nervous system.

Six Connecticut residents from the towns of Bridgeport, East Haven, Stamford, Stratford and West Haven were diagnosed with WNV-associated illnesses, with no fatalities reported. In 2014, no mosquitoes with EEE virus were identified and no human or domestic animal infections were reported.

To minimize the risk of acquiring a mosquito-borne illness, the following steps are suggested to prevent you and your family from being bitten by mosquitoes:

- Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors; it is especially important to cover the arms and legs of children. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven materials that keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
- Cover babies' playpens and carriages with mosquito netting when outdoors.
- Eliminate sources of standing water such as stagnant ponds, ditches, flower pots and old tires, as mosquito only needs a few tablespoons of water to lay eggs. Drain children's pools, clean clogged gutters, and flush birdbaths and fountains once or twice a week. Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, and any similar containers that have accumulated on your property, and drill holes in the bottoms of recycling and garbage containers that are left outside.

Anyone with questions or concerns about mosquito control, WNV, or any public health issue may contact the Central Connecticut Health District, serving the towns of Berlin, Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield, at www.ccthd.org or "liking" our Facebook page. Additional information about mosquito control can also be obtained from the CT Agricultural Experiment Station at www.ct.gov/caes and the CT Dept. of Agriculture at www.ct.gov/doag. Inquiries about pesticide-related subjects are handled through the National Pesticide Information Center at 1-800-858-7378.