

Message from Dragon Mosquito (Stratham Mosquito Contractor)

8/29/2024

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Stratham, NH

STRATHAM NH - The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed that a batch of mosquitoes collected in Stratham, NH has tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). The mosquito species that tested positive in Stratham is an aggressive daytime biter.

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed that a 41 year old Hampstead man died on 8-19-24 from complications due to EEE. In addition, mosquitoes collected in Danville, Fremont, Hampstead, Kingston, Kensington and Newton tested positive for EEE. A horse in Kensington died from EEE in late July.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. New Hampshire's last human cases of EEE were in 2014.

The risk of contracting the infection is low, but it is a very serious disease. When illness does occur, it happens within 4 to 10 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. If someone is experiencing the severe neurologic form of EEE, symptoms including fever, headache, vomiting, diarrhea and seizures they should be hospitalized immediately. There are no human vaccines to prevent EEE and treatment consists of supportive care. People with compromised immune systems should take extra precautions. Statistics show that EEE is fatal for 30% of people who are infected.

The best way to prevent infection from EEE and other mosquito-borne illnesses like Jamestown Canyon Virus and West Nile Virus is to prevent mosquito bites. Stay vigilant when you are outside. Protect yourself by using an EPA approved mosquito repellent and wear long pants and long sleeves any time that you are outside. More information on choosing a repellent and using repellents safely is available on the EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents>.

Horses are very susceptible to EEE and should be up to date with their annual EEE and West Nile Virus vaccinations including a booster. The vaccine has been used successfully in alpacas and llamas. **You cannot get EEE from a horse. Humans get EEE only through the bite of an infected mosquito.**

Continue to remove standing water on your property. Whenever it rains, eliminate mosquito breeding to help reduce the risk. Dump water out of containers such as wheel barrows, buckets, trash barrels, tarps, boats, canoes and any other manmade container. Check screens on windows and doors for holes whereby mosquitoes can enter your home.

Dragon Mosquito Control, the contractor for the Town's mosquito control program, continues to treat standing water until the season ends in late fall. Mosquito trapping and disease testing at the State Lab in Concord continues until mid-October. The threat of mosquitoes carrying disease won't diminish until we have a hard freeze or snow on the ground. All mosquitoes will enter hibernation or die off once temperatures remain below freezing.