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PRESS RELEASE
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DHHS Identifies Positive Test Result for West Nile Virus: First Positive Mosquito Batch of the Season

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is announcing that a batch of mosquitoes from the city of Nashua has recently tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). This is the first mosquito batch found to be positive for a mosquito-borne disease in 2016. There have been no human or animal cases of mosquito-borne disease so far this season in New Hampshire.

WNV, along with Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), are arboviruses that are transmitted from the bite of an infected mosquito. WNV was first identified in New Hampshire in August of 2000. The NH Public Health Lab has tested 1,373 mosquito batches, 6 animals, and 30 people so far this season for WNV and EEE. There have been no positive tests for EEE yet this year. Last year, three mosquito batches tested positive for WNV in New Hampshire and there were two positive batches for EEE. One animal tested positive for WNV last year but there were no EEE positive animals. No humans tested positive for WNV or EEE last year.

“This is the first positive mosquito test result in New Hampshire this season,” said NH State Epidemiologist Dr. Benjamin Chan, “New Hampshire residents and visitors should take precautions to prevent being bitten by mosquitoes as we head into the fall, the most risky time of year for mosquito-borne illnesses such as WNV and EEE.”

Residents and visitors to New Hampshire should protect themselves and their family members by using an effective mosquito repellent that contains 30% DEET, wearing long sleeves and pants at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active, and removing standing water from around your home so mosquitoes do not have a place to breed. Repellents with picaridin, IR3535 and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products also provide protection against mosquito bites.

Symptoms of the WNV usually appear within a week after being bitten by an infected mosquito, although many people can be infected and not develop any symptoms, or only develop very mild symptoms. Symptoms can include flu-like illness including fever, muscle aches, headaches, and fatigue. A very small percentage of individuals infected with WNV can go on to develop more serious central nervous system disease, including meningitis or encephalitis. If you or someone you know is experiencing flu-like symptoms, including fever and headache, contact your local medical provider.

Anyone with questions about WNV/EEE can call the New Hampshire Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496. Other information about EEE and West Nile virus are available on the DHHS website at www.dhhs.nh.gov and on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.

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Prevention Guidelines for West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis

NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services

1. Eliminate standing water and other mosquito breeding locations.

In warm weather, mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days!

- Remove old tires from your property.
- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or other containers. Don't overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outside.
- Make sure roof gutters are clean and draining properly.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered and keep covers free of standing water.
- Aerate garden ponds or stock them with fish.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.

2. Be aware of where mosquitoes live and breed and keep them from entering your home.

- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an outdoor home for adult mosquitoes, including several species commonly associated with West Nile virus and eastern equine encephalitis.
- Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors, or broken screens. Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Resting mosquitoes can often be flushed from indoor resting sites by using sweeping motions under beds, behind bedside tables etc. and once in flight, exterminated prior to sleeping at night.

3. Protect yourself from mosquito bites.

- If outside during evening, nighttime, and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks.
- Consider the use of an effective insect repellent, such as one containing DEET. A repellent containing 30% or less DEET (N,N-diethyl-methyl-meta-toluamide) for children and adults. Use DEET according to the manufacturer's directions. Children

should not apply DEET to themselves. Repellents that contain Picaridin, para-menthane-diol or oil of lemon eucalyptus have also been determined to be effective.

- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense, and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

For more information on West Nile Virus or Eastern Equine Encephalitis, visit the Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus Website at <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/arboviral/index.htm>.