

# Press Release

## NH DHHS Identifies West Nile Virus in Stratham, NH

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed that a second batch of mosquitoes collected on October 17, 2023 in Stratham, NH tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The State has raised Stratham's threat level to moderate. This particular mosquito species bite birds and humans.

West Nile Virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Human cases in NH have been rare over the last two decades. The risk of contracting the infection is low and in the overwhelming majority of cases, there are no symptoms or just mild, flu-like symptoms. If illness does occur, it happens within 4 to 10 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. If someone is experiencing flu-like symptoms including fever and headache, they should contact their local medical provider. There are no vaccines to prevent WNV and treatment consists of supportive care. People with compromised immune systems should take extra precautions.

The best way to prevent infection from West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne illnesses like Jamestown Canyon Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is to prevent mosquito bites. Stay vigilant when you are outside. Protect yourself by using an EPA approved mosquito repellent, avoid exposure at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active, wear long pants and long sleeves. More information on choosing a repellent and using repellents safely is available on the EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents>.

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, bird baths and any other manmade container. Check screens on windows and doors for holes whereby mosquitoes can enter your home.

Mosquito trapping in Stratham and disease testing at the State Lab in Concord has ended for the season. The threat of mosquitoes carrying disease won't diminish until late fall when we have a hard freeze or snow on the ground. There are no plans to conduct spraying for adult mosquitoes. All mosquitoes will enter hibernation or die off once temperatures fall below freezing.