



Naugatuck Valley Health District
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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NVHD Update on Mosquito Prevention and Eastern Equine Encephalitis

The Naugatuck Valley Health District (NVHD) is advising residents to continue general personal preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites.

For residents of towns that make up the Naugatuck Valley Health District -- Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Seymour and Shelton, the risk of acquiring any mosquito-borne disease, whether it be Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) or West Nile Virus, is close to zero at this time of year.

On August 26, 2019, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) found EEE virus in mosquitoes that bite only birds at their trap site in Shelton, which is near a swamp. Mosquitoes trapped at this CAES site since then have tested negative for EEE virus.

On September 23, 2019, CAES found EEE virus in mosquitoes that bite only birds in our neighboring community Bethany, at their trap site which is near a bog. This is the first time that EEE virus has been found at this trap site this year, which is evidence that very few mosquitoes are infected with EEE virus at this trap site.

The NVHD Director of Health remains in close contact and consultation with the State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program, which is a collaborative effort involving the CAES, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, the Department of Agriculture, and the UCONN Department of Pathobiology and Veterinary Science. These are the agencies responsible for monitoring the potential public health threat of mosquito-borne diseases in our state.

From a public health standpoint, NVHD and the Connecticut Mosquito Management Program are recommending that Valley residents take personal protective measures to prevent mosquito bites until the first hard frost of the fall. It is not necessary for residents in our District to cancel or limit activity around dusk or dawn. Spraying pesticides to reduce mosquito populations is not likely to be effective at this time of year.

NVHD Director of Health Jessica Stelmaszek said, "Connecticut, particularly the southeastern part of the state, and our neighboring states in New England, are seeing an unusually high presence of EEE detected this



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year however I want to remind Valley residents that the risk of transmission in the western part of the state remains very low. Even though the risk is low, residents should still practice precautions to avoid being bit."

NVHD is asking Valley residents not to take unnecessary trips into marshes and freshwater swamps as these are typically breeding grounds for mosquitoes that transmit the EEE virus, with such mosquitoes being most active at dusk and dawn. Overnight camping or other substantial outdoor exposure in freshwater swamps should be avoided. Even though the temperatures are getting cooler, mosquitoes continue to be active until the first heavy frost and residents should continue to take measures to prevent mosquito bites.

NVHD is recommending that residents continue to take general precautions that include the following:

- Use insect repellent, according to directions, when outdoors
- Cover up: wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks and shoes when outdoors
- Keep mosquitoes outside by using window and door screens that are tight-fitting and in good repair
- Remove items that may lead to standing/stagnant water around your home. Mosquitoes can breed in water that collects in ditches, clogged gutters, old tires, wheelbarrows, wading pools, etc.
- Do not camp overnight near freshwater swamps and use mosquito netting on tents

NVHD maintains a webpage dedicated to updates regarding EEE and mosquito prevention at <http://www.nvhd.org/eee-2019> and will continue to post message on its social media pages (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

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