



## West Nile Virus Confirmed in Mosquitoes from Devens

**DATE:** July 25, 2018  
**TOWN:** Devens

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The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced today that West Nile virus (WNV) has been detected in two (2) mosquitoes collected from Devens, Massachusetts. In 2017, 5,496 mosquito samples were tested for WNV and 290 samples were positive. Devens had one (1) WNV positive mosquito sample identified in 2017.

WNV is most commonly transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquitoes that carry this virus are common throughout the state, and are found in urban as well as more rural areas. While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe infection.

**By taking a few, common-sense precautions, people can help to protect themselves and their loved ones:**

### **Avoid Mosquito Bites**

- **Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours** - The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning. If you are outdoors at any time and notice mosquitoes around you, take steps to avoid being bitten by moving indoors, covering up and/or wearing repellent.
- **Clothing Can Help** reduce mosquito bites. Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.
- **Apply Insect Repellent** when you go outdoors. Use a repellent with **DEET** (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), **permethrin**, **picaridin** (KBR 3023), **IR3535** or **oil of lemon eucalyptus** [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age. Permethrin products are intended for use on items such as clothing, shoes, bed nets and camping gear and should not be applied to skin.

### **Mosquito-Proof Your Home**

- **Drain Standing Water** – Many mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or getting rid of items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools, and change water in birdbaths frequently.
- **Install or Repair Screens** - Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

Devens continues to participate in the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Management Control Project (CMMCP) to monitor and help control mosquito populations in the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone and has alerted the program to these findings. If you would like to request service for your property, you can call the CMMCP office at 508.393.3055 or on-line at: <http://www.cmmcp.org>. The Devens Enterprise Commission and MassDevelopment will continue to work closely with the MDPH and the CMMCP to provide public notice, education and limited spraying, when appropriate, in Devens. The CMMCP August spraying schedule for Devens and information on the CMMCP program can be found at: [http://www.devensec.com/news/CMMCP\\_Note\\_7\\_20\\_18.pdf](http://www.devensec.com/news/CMMCP_Note_7_20_18.pdf)

Additional information about WNV and reports of current and historical WNV virus activity in Massachusetts can be found on the MDPH website at: [www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito](http://www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito).