

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Diana L. Klink
(Office) 757.514.4104
(Mobile) 757.359.1845

Tim Kelley
(Office) 757-514-4103
(Mobile) 757-871-3039

SUFFOLK PUBLIC WORKS - DIVISION OF MOSQUITO CONTROL DETECTS FIRST OCCURRENCES OF WNV AND EEE IN HAMPTON ROADS

SUFFOLK, VA. (June 27, 2018) The City of Suffolk has detected the first instances of mosquitoes that have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Hampton Roads. Mosquitoes collected in the Riverview, North Street, and Dumville Lane areas of Suffolk have tested positive for WNV. Mosquitoes collected in Cove Point and the Lamb Avenue area have tested positive for EEE. Citizens should be aware that there is increased WNV and EEE activity in these areas and they should take the necessary actions to protect themselves while engaging in outdoor activities.

WNV infected individuals can show no symptoms, mild symptoms, or severe symptoms. According to statistics, 80 percent of people (about 4 out of 5) who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms at all. Up to 20 percent of the people who exhibit mild symptoms of WNV have flu-like symptoms and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. In the most severe of cases (1 of 150) of WNV individuals will develop severe illness which can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor,

disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis.

EEE is a very rare human disease that affects 5 to 10 humans annually in the United States. EEE infection in humans begins with mild flu-like symptoms, progresses into disorientation, seizures, coma, encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain) and in the most severe cases individuals die. Many that survive will have “mild to severe brain damage”. No human cases of EEE have ever been reported in the City of Suffolk.

Horses are commonly found with EEE in Suffolk. Mosquito Control urges horse owners to vaccinate their horses for EEE and any other insect-transmitted diseases that could affect their animals. Properly timed and administered vaccinations by a licensed veterinarian can mean a healthy horse during the mosquito season.

Mosquito Control Operations are intensifying their efforts in the noted areas as a result of these positive test confirmations. Increased mosquito surveillance, treatment of standing water, and evening spray applications for adult mosquitoes are also being administered.

You can greatly decrease your chances of contracting WNV and EEE by protecting yourself from excessive mosquito bites while outdoors by following these recommendations:

- Remain indoors during times of greatest mosquito activity
 - (1 hour before dusk to 1 hour before dawn)
- Wear loose, long, and light-colored clothing when outdoors
- Use insect repellants containing DEET according to the label instructions.

You can contribute to the efforts of Mosquito Control Operations by eliminating mosquito-breeding areas around your home and neighborhood by following these steps:

- Empty water-holding containers:
 - buckets, drums, bottles, tin cans, wheel barrows, potted plant trays, etc.
- Properly dispose of used tires.
- Clear roof gutters, downspouts and corrugated black drainpipes for any water collection.
- Clean wading and swimming pools.
- Drain water from tarps.
- Place Mosquito Dunks in stagnant water areas around your home which include ditches and low lying areas

Free Mosquito Dunks are available to Suffolk citizens at your local Suffolk Fire & Rescue Stations 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, the Media & Community Relations Department at City Hall, Whaleyville Community Center, East Suffolk Recreation Center, and all three Suffolk Public Libraries. In order to get your free Mosquito Dunks you must be 18 years of age or older, have proof of residence in the City of Suffolk, proper picture identification and sign the “Information Sheet” at the pick-up location. Placing Mosquito Dunks in stagnant water habitats is a common practice used to eliminate mosquito larvae.

For more information concerning EEE and WNV, refer to the following links:

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DEE/Vectorborne/factsheets/eee.htm>

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DEE/Vectorborne/factsheets/westnilevir.us.htm>

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/EasternEquineEncephalitis/gen/qa.html>

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/wnv_factsheet.htm

Horses and EEE Fact Sheet provided by Rutgers University

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~insects/heee.htm>

For more information about Suffolk Mosquito Control, contact Charles Abadam, Suffolk Mosquito Control Superintendent, at cabadam@suffolkva.us, or call 757.514.7609.

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