



**CITY OF PEABODY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**24 Lowell Street
Peabody, Massachusetts 01960
(978) 538-5926
Fax: (978) 538-5990**

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**SHARON CAMERON
DIRECTOR**

West Nile Virus Confirmed in Mosquito Sample in Peabody

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**CONTACT: Sharon Cameron
TELEPHONE: 978 538 5926**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced today that West Nile virus (WNV) has been detected in a mosquito sample collected from Peabody. In 2012, 6828 mosquito samples were tested for WNV throughout Massachusetts, and 307 samples were positive. Peabody had two WNV positive mosquito samples and 2 EEE positive mosquito samples identified in 2012.

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. **Please note that there have been no human or animal cases of West Nile virus identified in Peabody this year.**

Even though summer is over, mosquitoes will be with us throughout the fall until the first frost. It is important to take a few common-sense precautions to protect yourself and your 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 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. 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)]. These products have restrictions, so make sure to follow the instructions on the product label.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- **Drain Standing Water** - 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.

The City of Peabody has worked closely with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control District throughout this season to reduce the risk of illness spread by mosquitoes. Mosquito pools are tested twice weekly from May to September in order to help identify infected mosquitoes. In addition, pesticide treatment of catch basins (where mosquitoes lay their eggs) was performed throughout the City, and targeted spraying for mosquitoes was conducted earlier this summer.

Information about WNV and reports of current and historical WNV virus activity in Massachusetts can be found on the MDPH website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/wnv>. You may also contact the Peabody Health Department at (978) 538-5926.