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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

August 14, 2019

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Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Found in Manchester Mosquito Batches

Manchester, NH – The Manchester Health Department announced today that 2 batches of mosquitoes, both collected in Manchester on August 7, have tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). These are the first EEE positive mosquito batches identified in Manchester this year. One batch tested positive for EEE last year. This raises the Arboviral Disease Risk level to “Moderate”.

There have been no EEE infections identified yet this season in humans or animals. EEE positive mosquito batches have been detected in Pelham, which were collected on August 1.

According to Anna Thomas, MPH, Manchester’s Public Health Director, “As with every year, there is a possibility that we might detect mosquito borne illnesses. And as such, everyone should be vigilant in eliminating mosquito breeding areas and taking personal precautions including the use of an effective insect repellent, to prevent being bitten by mosquitoes.”

The Manchester Health Department routinely collects, sorts and submits mosquitoes, from locations in Manchester, for testing at the NH Public Health Laboratory, beginning in early July and through the active mosquito season. We will keep the public informed about additional positive results in Manchester. Public health interventions, such as spraying for adult mosquitoes, may be indicated based on disease activity.

Symptoms of EEE virus usually appear 4 to 10 days after being bitten by a mosquito carrying the EEE virus. People who get sick from EEE can develop a flu-like illness, including fever, headache, weakness, and muscle and joint pains. A more serious central nervous system infection can develop such as meningitis and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). EEE typically causes a more serious disease than WNV and carries a high mortality rate for those who contract the serious encephalitic form of the illness. There is no specific treatment for the disease.

Prevention guidelines for EEE and other arboviruses can be found below. Anyone with questions about arboviruses, including EEE, can call the New Hampshire Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 or the Manchester Health Department at 624-6466.

For more information on West Nile Virus or Eastern Equine Encephalitis, visit the Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus Website at https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/arboviral/.

Infectious Disease Fact Sheets, including one on Eastern Equine Encephalitis are available. For more information, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.

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Prevention Guidelines for West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis

1. Eliminate standing water and other mosquito breeding locations around your property. Please do not attempt to drain or alter natural waterbodies for mosquito control, since the management of ponds and wetlands is regulated by the NH Department of Environmental Services and any planned alterations will require a permit before work may begin. In warm weather, mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days.

- Remove old tires from your property.
- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or other containers. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outside.
- Make sure roof gutters are clean and draining properly.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered and keep covers free of standing water.
- Aerate garden ponds or stock them with fish.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.

2. Be aware of where mosquitoes live and breed and keep them from entering your home.

- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an outdoor home for adult mosquitoes, including several species commonly associated with West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis.
- Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors or broken screens. Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Resting mosquitoes can often be flushed from indoor resting sites by using sweeping motions under beds, behind bedside tables etc. and once in flight, exterminated prior to sleeping at night.

3. Protect yourself from mosquito bites.

- If outside during evening, nighttime, and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks.
- Consider the use of an effective insect repellent, such as one containing DEET. A repellent containing 30% or less DEET (N,N-diethyl-methyl-meta-toluamide) for children and adults. Use DEET according to the manufacturer's directions. Children should not apply DEET to themselves. Repellents that contain Picaridin, para-menthane-diol, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 have also been determined to be effective.
- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense, and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.
- The following is a link to EPA evaluated repellents effective against mosquitoes: https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents