



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
STATE RECLAMATION & MOSQUITO CONTROL BOARD
**CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS
MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT**

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TIMOTHY MCGLINCHY

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Dear Board of Health Members,

West Nile Virus has been detected in much of the state at this point in the summer as I'm sure many of you realize. With weeks of mosquito activity ahead of us I just want to reinforce the messaging that we are putting out at Central Mass Mosquito Control Project (CMMCP) which is "Avoid Mosquito Bites!". Regardless of interventions such as spraying to control adult mosquitoes, treating catch basins and storm water for mosquito larvae or conducting source reduction operations the message to the public remains the same: "Avoid Mosquito Bites".

I have provided some information and FAQ's on WNV to assist health officers get the message out to the public on how they can limit their exposure to mosquito bites. Much of this information comes from the Mass DPH. It also offers some perspective on the commonality of the WNV disease itself in the state of Massachusetts. This information, along with other mosquito virus information, is available on our website www.cmmcp.org

I hope that this information will be of value to you all in getting the message out to Avoid Mosquito Bites!

Respectfully,

Timothy E. McGlinchy,
Director CMMCP

How common is WNV in Massachusetts?

Because most people who are exposed to WNV have no symptoms, it is difficult to know exactly how many people have been infected. People who develop severe illness with WNV are most often reported. Between 2014 and 2023, 131 people were reported with WNV infection in Massachusetts. Eight of these people died. Cases have been identified from around the state.

What can you do to protect yourself from WNV?

Since WNV is most commonly spread by mosquitoes, here are some things you can do to reduce your chances of being bitten:

- Be aware when you schedule outdoor events that mosquitoes are most active between the hours of dusk and dawn.
- When you are outdoors, wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and socks. This may be difficult to do when the weather is hot, but it will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.
- Use a repellent with **DEET** (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), **permethrin**, **picaridin** (KBR 3023), **IR3535** (3-[N-butyl-N-acetyl]-aminopropionic acid) or **oil of lemon eucalyptus** [p-menthane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions given 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.
- Keep mosquitoes out of your house by repairing any holes in your screens and making sure they are tightly attached to all your doors and windows.
- Remove areas of standing water around your home. Here are some suggestions:
 - Look around outside your house for containers and other things that might collect water and turn them over, regularly empty them, or dispose of them.
 - Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outdoors so that water can drain out.
 - Clean clogged roof gutters; remove leaves and debris that may prevent drainage of rainwater.
 - Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.

- Change the water in birdbaths every few days; aerate ornamental ponds or stock them with fish.
- Keep swimming pools clean and properly chlorinated; remove standing water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.
- More information on choosing and using repellents safely is included in the [mosquito repellents fact sheet](#). If you can't go online, contact MDPH at (617) 983-6800 for a hard copy.

Did you know?

Mosquitoes can begin to multiply in any puddle or standing water that lasts for more than four days! Mosquito breeding sites can be anywhere. **Take action** to reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and neighborhood. Organize a neighborhood clean up day to pick up containers from vacant lots and parks and to encourage people to keep their yards free of standing water. Mosquitoes don't care about fences, so it's important to remove areas of standing water throughout the neighborhood.