



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, July 27, 2020, Peterborough

West Nile Virus Confirmed in Local Mosquitoes

Residents Reminded to Get Rid of Standing Water and Avoid Mosquito Bites

Peterborough Public Health is advising the public that mosquitoes in the City of Peterborough have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). The mosquitoes were trapped from July 20 to 23, 2020.

This is the first positive mosquito pool found in Peterborough this year. According to [Public Health Ontario](http://PublicHealthOntario), as of July 18, 2020 there were no WNV positive mosquito pools identified in the province and no human WNV cases. During the summer months and early fall, PPH sets traps weekly throughout the City and County of Peterborough to gather mosquito specimens for WNV testing.

“Now that we’ve identified mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus in our area, it’s especially important that residents take care to prevent mosquito bites,” said Wanda Tonus, Public Health Inspector. “This is a good reminder for residents to get rid of any standing water in their yards and to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites.”

Ms. Tonus noted that the majority of WNV cases do not show symptoms. About 20% of infected people may have a mild flu-like illness with fever, headache, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash and swollen lymph nodes or other non-specific symptoms that last several days. Other symptoms may include nausea, vomiting, or eye pain. Less than one percent of infected people will develop neuro-invasive disease, with older age groups and males disproportionately affected.

Although the risk of becoming infected is low, prevention against mosquito bites is the best protection. Individuals can protect themselves from bites in several ways:

- Cover up when going outside between the hours of dusk and dawn. Remember to wear:
 - a long-sleeved shirt or jacket and long pants (tucked into your socks for extra protection)
 - light-coloured clothing
 - if you will be outside for a long time, wear special clothing that is designed to protect you from bugs

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- Use insect repellent containing DEET. (DEET is a powerful chemical. Always read the label directions for use. Or, ask your pharmacist for help when choosing a DEET product.)
- Clean up:
 - once a week, get rid of standing water around your home (mosquitoes lay their eggs in stagnant water, even small amounts)
 - keep bushes and shrubs clear of overgrowth and debris (adult mosquitoes like to rest in dense shrubbery)
 - turn your compost pile often

The City of Peterborough has completed one round of larviciding catch basins within its jurisdiction and a second round is underway.

For additional information on protection measures against West Nile virus such as reducing mosquito breeding sites and the safe use of insect repellents, please visit www.publichealthontario.ca or www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca.

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