

TOWN OF NORTH READING
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

235 NORTH STREET
NORTH READING, MA 01864
(978) 357-5242 • (978) 664-1713 (FAX)

[HTTP://WWW.NORTHREADINGMA.GOV/HEALTH-DEPARTMENT](http://www.northreadingma.gov/health-department)

MICHAEL P. GILBERTO
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

ROBERT F. BRACEY
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

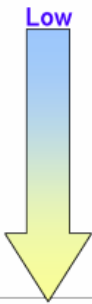



West Nile Virus Confirmed in Mosquitoes from the Town of North Reading

August 16, 2018

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced today that West Nile virus (WNV) has been detected in mosquitoes collected from the Town of North Reading, Massachusetts. In 2017, 5,496 mosquito samples were tested for WNV and 290 samples were tested positive in Massachusetts. The Town of North Reading had tested positive for WNV in mosquito samples identified in 2017.

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.

While the Town of North Reading risk level has increased from “Low” to “Moderate” category, the North Reading Health Department and the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project at this time are recommending the following additional precautionary measures be taken by residents and their families to reduce the chance of infection:

Key to Color Coding on WNV Risk Map		
Risk	What it Means	What You Can Do
 Low	Infection with WNV is unlikely	TO Prepare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your risk – check regularly at www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito • Repair screens • Cleanup to get rid of mosquito breeding sites • Be aware of stagnant water on private property (e.g. unused swimming pools) and consult the local board of health. TO Prevent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear mosquito repellent between dusk to dawn • Wear long sleeves and long pants from dusk to dawn • Use mosquito netting on baby carriages and playpens
 Moderate	Infection with WNV is likely or has already occurred	TO Prevent – add this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear mosquito repellent • Wear long sleeves and long pants when weather permits • Use mosquito netting on baby carriages and playpens • Dump standing water twice weekly
 High	More people may get infected with WNV in your area	TO Prevent – add this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People over 50 or those who are immune compromised should adjust outdoor activity to avoid peak mosquito hours (from dusk to dawn)
 Critical	Unusually high risk from WNV exists	TO Prevent – add this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation specific recommendations will be made

1. **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 at any time 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. Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

2. **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)] according to the instructions 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.

3. **Mosquito-Proof Your Home**

- Drain Standing Water – Many 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.

While the North Reading Health Department continues to work closely with the MDPH and other agencies, locally we on an annually basis the health department provides:

- Treatment and baiting of Town catch basins for mosquitos.
- Provide ground spraying throughout the Town to combat and control mosquito populations.
- Provide and distribution of fact sheets on WNV and on reducing exposure to mosquitoes that are available at the Health Department office and the Health Department web site <https://www.northreadingma.gov/health-department>
- Provide residents with targeted education programs – yearly community outreach class on WNV/EEE and Lyme disease

For additional Information about WNV and reports of current and historical WNV virus activity in Massachusetts can be found on the MDPH website at: www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito

Residents with questions about mosquitoes or how to control them can contact either Mr. Robert F. Bracey, Director of Public Health at the Town of North Reading Health Department 978-357-5242 or visit the Town Health Department web site at www.northreadingma.gov/health-department or the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project at 781-893-5759 or at the Project web site at <https://sudbury.ma.us/emmcp/>.

