
Spring 2008

City of Toronto Vector Borne Diseases Program (WNV)

The first human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Toronto occurred in 2002 when 166 WNV cases and 11 deaths were reported to Toronto Public Health. Since then, human cases of WNV have occurred every year in Toronto.

The City has a WNV prevention program that includes 3 components: 1) monitoring for WNV in birds, mosquitoes and people; 2) community outreach; and 3) mosquito reduction focused on *Culex* mosquitoes (the main local carrier of WNV) and their breeding sites.

Toronto Public Health Vector Borne Diseases Program in 2008:

Monitoring (surveillance) of WNV in the environment

Bird surveillance and pick-up

Crows and blue jays will be picked up by animal services and then tested for WNV at the Canadian Co-operative Wildlife Health Centre in Guelph to determine the presence of the virus in the city.

Mosquito trapping – adult

Toronto Public Health will set up mosquito traps throughout the city and will test mosquitoes for WNV.

Human surveillance

Human WNV cases must be reported to Toronto Public Health by physicians and laboratories. Toronto Public Health tracks the number of human cases of West Nile Virus and provides information on the virus to physicians and hospitals.

Community Outreach

Seasonal WNV Public Education Campaign

The City of Toronto has a public education campaign including: press releases, information sessions; paid advertising; circulation of materials to libraries and civic and recreation centres; and regular updates in existing City publications and on the web site. This information emphasizes both what the City is doing and what residents, businesses and institutions can do. Strategies to reduce mosquito breeding sites will be promoted to institutional partners such as school boards, hospitals, TTC, Toronto Community Housing Corporation, Toronto Hydro, etc.

WNV Web Site- www.toronto.ca/health/westnile/

The WNV web site provides regular updates on the status of WNV in Toronto and the location of where larviciding is taking place in the city. In addition the site contains basic information on WNV and links to other WNV related web sites.

WNV Information Line– 416-338-7600

The WNV information line is available seven days a week to report stagnant water and dead birds. Other non urgent question about WNV are answered during normal business hours

Mosquito Reduction Program

Identification and Remediation of stagnant water sites

Sites containing stagnant surface are identified and tested for the presence of mosquito larvae. The water is treated with larvicide and/or the site is cleaned up to remove the stagnant water.

Catch basin larviciding

There are approximately 200,000 roadside storm sewers (catch basins) which hold water and breed mosquitoes through even the driest of summers. The immature mosquitoes are treated with larvicides to prevent them from developing into adults which can then bite people.

**For more information call 416-338-7600 or
visit our web site @ www.toronto.ca/health**