

July 26, 2005

## **Mosquitoes test positive for West Nile Virus**

Toronto Public Health today reported that mosquitoes found in the city have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). These are the first positive mosquito results in Toronto this year.

The positive mosquitoes were found in the Westway and Kipling Avenue area of Etobicoke. Surveillance for the virus has been increased in this area.

Toronto Public Health is also enhancing its mosquito monitoring and treatment activities across the city. Treatment includes larviciding catch basins and open water.

Two birds, a blue jay and an American crow, have also tested positive for the virus, but no human cases have been reported this summer. The birds were found in the same area as the mosquitoes.

"We have confirmed the virus is present in both birds and mosquitoes," said Danny Kartzalis, Manager of the West Nile Virus program for Toronto Public Health. "The positive findings reinforce the need for the public to continue taking precautions to safeguard themselves from West Nile Virus."

In 2004, Toronto Public Health detected its first positive mosquitoes on July 29<sup>th</sup>. At that time four birds had also tested positive.

The following personal protection measures are recommended:

- Use a mosquito repellent following the manufacturer's instructions
- Wear light-coloured clothing and cover up in areas where mosquitoes are present
- Take these precautions especially in early morning and early evening, when mosquitoes are most active
- Remove standing water around your home

The overall risk of becoming infected with WNV is low and most people bitten by an infected mosquito do not get sick. Some people are at higher risk, especially those over 55 years of age and persons with compromised immune systems due to illnesses such as cancer, diabetes or heart disease.

For more information visit the Web site at [www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health) or call 416-338-7600.

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