



# County of Passaic

## Mosquito Control

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### **WEST NILE VIRUS ACTIVITY IDENTIFIED IN PASSAIC COUNTY**

*Residents urged to reduce mosquito risks*

**PASSAIC COUNTY, NJ** – With reports of West Nile virus illness in two residents of Passaic County, combined with the persistent warm and rainy weather, the Passaic County Department of Health and the Division of Mosquito Control are urging property owners to take steps necessary to reduce mosquito populations and to protect themselves against the risk of mosquito-borne disease.

Passaic County Mosquito Control continues to monitor for West Nile virus in local mosquito populations, and continues to spray to control mosquito populations, as necessary. Passaic County currently has two confirmed human cases of West Nile virus, while sixteen mosquito pools in the county have tested positive for the virus.

“Passaic County Department of Health and the mosquito control division take disease prevention very seriously,” said Dr. Charlene Gungil, Director of the County Health Department. “Through our mosquito surveillance efforts, we are able to focus control efforts to maximize their effectiveness and reduce health risks as much as possible.”

West Nile virus is spread by the bite of a mosquito infected with the West Nile virus. The virus is not spread from person to person. Most people who become infected with the virus do not become ill. About 20 percent of infected people will develop West Nile fever. When symptoms occur, they may be mild or severe. Mild symptoms include flu-like illness with fever, headache, body aches, nausea, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach, and back. Symptoms of severe cases of West Nile virus include high fever, neck stiffness, and encephalitis, a swelling of the brain that can lead to coma, convulsions, and death. Less than one percent of infected people will develop severe symptoms. People over the age of 50 and people with weakened immune systems are at greater risk of developing severe illness.

Residents and business owners in Passaic County are urged to take these steps:

- Remove standing water from your property by emptying water from flower pots, pet watering dishes, birdbaths, swimming pool covers, buckets, barrels, and cans at least once a week.
- Recycle used/discarded tires.
- Clear clogged rain gutters of leaves and debris.
- Cover as much skin as you can when going outside by wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants and closed-toe shoes.
- Use an EPA-registered insect repellent when outdoors, following the directions on the label.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, including those not in use. An unmaintained swimming pool can produce enough mosquitoes to result in neighborhood-wide mosquito nuisance.
- Repair and maintain window and door screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering buildings.

To learn more about mosquito-borne diseases and how you can help prevent them, visit the Passaic County Mosquito Control division on the web at: [www.passaiccountynj.org/mosquito](http://www.passaiccountynj.org/mosquito)