

**Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Risk Level Change****DATE: August 24, 2011**
TOWN: Easton**CONTACT: Mark Taylor**
TELEPHONE: 508-230-0620

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced today that EEE Risk level for the Town of Easton has been changed from Moderate to High. This change was made based on an increase in the number of EEE positive mosquito in the testing pools, the presence of the virus in mammal biting mosquito species and increasing population numbers of mosquitos.

No additional EEE positive mosquitos have been found in Easton as of this time. Our proximity to Towns with positive samples on the rise has prompted this action.

With the change from Moderate to High, it is appropriate to adjust your outdoor activities to avoid peak mosquito hours (Dusk to Dawn).

EEE is a rare but serious illness spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. While EEE can infect people of all ages, people under 15 years of age or over 50 years of age are at greatest risk for serious illness.

By taking a few, common-sense precautions, people can help to protect themselves and their loved ones:

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. Otherwise, take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing.
- **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.
- **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.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- **Drain Standing Water** - 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.

Information about EEE and reports of EEE virus activity in Massachusetts during 2010 can be found on the MDPH website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/wnv>. Recorded information about EEE is also available by calling the MDPH Public Health Information Line at 1-866-MASS-WNV (1-866-627-7968).