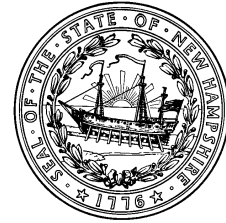


NH Department of Health and Human Services  
129 Pleasant Street – Hugh Gallen State Office Park  
Concord, NH 03301



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT**  
**Public Information Office**  
**603-271-4051**

## **DHHS Identifies First Positive Test This Year for EEE Found in Emu in Barnstead**

**Concord, NH** - The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) today announced the first positive test this year for eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). An emu from the town of Barnstead tested positive for the disease. This is the first sign of EEE in New Hampshire this year; EEE was first identified in the State in 2004.

“This finding reinforces the fact that EEE is once again here in New Hampshire,” stated DHHS Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas. “We are reminding anyone planning to spend any time outside to take a few simple steps to protect you and your loved ones from this disease; use effective insect repellent and try to wear long sleeves and pants at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.”

Because of the increased risk of disease to people, DHHS is expanding its public health threat to include the towns of Strafford, Pittsfield, Barnstead, Alton, Epsom, Chichester and Gilmanton in the current public health threat, which includes Rockingham, Eastern Hillsborough, Southern Merrimack, and Southern Strafford Counties. This public health threat designation is in order to help provide financial assistance for control efforts in communities working to combat EEE and WNV.

“Even though EEE is a rare disease,” said Dr. Jose T. Montero, Director of Public Health at DHHS, “it can be very serious for those who contract the serious encephalitis form of the illness. However, the only way someone can be infected with EEE is to be bitten by an infected mosquito so the best thing you can do is to avoid being bitten in the first place.”

This positive test of EEE comes just one week after the State identified its first positive test of West Nile Virus (WNV). Eastern equine encephalitis and West Nile virus are transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Symptoms of EEE may include high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, and sore throat. There is not treatment for the disease, which can lead to seizures and coma. Symptoms usually occur 4 to 10 days after being bitten.

Questions about EEE and WNV can be answered by calling the toll free EEE/West Nile Virus hotline at 1-866-273-6453. You can also find extensive information about both diseases on our website [www.dhhs.nh.gov](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov).

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Attachments: (1) Prevention Guidelines for WNV and EEE

# Prevention Guidelines for West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis

*NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services*

**1. Eliminate standing water and other mosquito breeding locations around your property. Please do not attempt to drain or alter natural water bodies for mosquito control, since the management of ponds and wetlands is regulated by the Department of Environmental Services and any planned alterations will require a permit before work may begin. In warm weather, mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts more than 4 days!**

- Remove old tires from your property.
- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or other containers. Don't overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outside.
- Make sure roof gutters are clean and draining properly.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered and keep covers free of standing water.
- Aerate garden ponds or stock them with fish.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.

**2. Be aware of where mosquitoes live and breed and keep them from entering your home.**

- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an outdoor home for adult mosquitoes, including several species commonly associated with West Nile virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis.
- Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors or broken screens. Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Resting mosquitoes can often be flushed from indoor resting sites by using sweeping motions under beds, behind bedside tables etc. and once in flight, exterminated prior to sleeping at night.

**3. Protect yourself from mosquito bites.**

- If outside during evening, nighttime, and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks.
- Consider the use of an effective insect repellent, such as one containing DEET. A repellent containing 30% or less DEET (N,N-diethyl-methyl-meta-toluamide) for children and adults. Use DEET according to the manufacturer's directions. Children should not apply DEET to themselves. Repellents that contain Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 have also been determined to be effective.
- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense, and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

*For more information on West Nile Virus or Eastern Equine Encephalitis, call the NH Department of Health and Human Services toll-free West Nile Virus Information Line at 866-273-NILE (6543), or visit the DHHS website at [www.dhhs.nh.gov](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov).*