

Public Service Announcement  
Town of Salem, NH

## What You Need To Know About West Nile Virus

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a viral infection that can be spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. The mosquito contracts the virus from an infected bird.

Most people who get infected with West Nile Virus do not get sick or have mild symptoms. If illness occurs, it happens within 5 to 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

In some individuals, particularly the elderly, West Nile Virus can cause serious disease that affects brain tissue. At its most serious, it can cause permanent neurological damage and can be fatal. Encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) symptoms include the rapid onset of severe headache, high fever, stiff neck, confusion, loss of consciousness, and muscle weakness.

Birds infected with West Nile Virus sometimes get sick and die. Crows and blue jays appear to be more susceptible to WNV than other species.

## How To Protect Yourself

Remove old tires from the property.  
Dispose of cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or other containers.  
Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers.  
Clean roof gutters.  
Clean and chlorinate pools. If not in use, keep empty and covered.  
Drain water from pool covers.  
Aerate garden ponds or stock them with fish.  
Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in bird baths at least twice weekly.  
Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.  
Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their property.

## 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 insect repellent containing 10% or less DEET (N, N-diethyl-methyl-metoluamide) for children and no more than 30% DEET for adults. Use DEET according to the manufacturer's directions. Children should not apply DEET to themselves.

Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

More information on the West Nile Virus can be found by calling the WNV informational phone line at 1-866-273-6453 or by visiting the State's website at [www.dhhs.state.nh.us](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us).

To report a dead bird, please contact the Animal Control Officer at 890-2390.

If you have any questions concerning the Town of Salem's mosquito control program, please contact Brian A. Lockard, Salem Health Officer, at 890-2050.