

Massachusetts public health officials raise risk level for EEE in 6 more communities

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced that the risk level for eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus in the communities of Bridgewater and Halifax in Plymouth County has been raised from moderate to high. The risk level for East Bridgewater, Hanson, Pembroke, and West Bridgewater in Plymouth County has been raised to moderate. This brings the total of communities at high or critical risk to eight. There has been one human EEE case this year.

On August 8, DPH, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), and the State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board (SRMCB) announced that aerial spraying for mosquitoes will take place in specific areas of Plymouth County and a small part of Bristol County. Spraying is planned to begin this evening, Monday, August 10 but is weather and equipment dependent.

The 25 communities in the spray zone are Bridgewater, Carver, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanover, Hanson, Kingston, Lakeville, Marion, Mattapoisett, Middleborough, Norwell, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Rochester, Rockland, Wareham, West Bridgewater, and Whitman in Plymouth County, and Acushnet, Easton, Raynham, and Taunton in Bristol County. The final spray map is available online.

EEE is a rare but serious and potentially fatal disease that can affect people of all ages. There were 12 human cases and six deaths in 2020. Before that, the most recent outbreak years were 2004-2006, and 2010-2012. There were 22 human cases of EEE infection during those two outbreak periods with 14 cases occurring among residents of Bristol and Plymouth

Counties.

EEE virus has been found in 46 mosquito samples this year and 80 percent of them are from species of mosquitoes capable of spreading the virus to people. Information about current mosquito activity will continue to be updated regularly and can be found [here](#).

All residents are reminded to use mosquito repellent any time they are outside, and those in high and critical risk communities are advised to schedule their outdoor activity to avoid the dusk to dawn hours to reduce exposure to the mosquitoes most likely to spread EEE.