

City of New Bedford weekly targeted ground spraying for mosquitos to begin

The New Bedford Health Department, working closely with the Bristol County Mosquito Control Project and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, is again conducting its annual monitoring program to track the potential threat from mosquitoes that could be carrying EEE or WNV.

Under the program, crews place traps to collect pools of mosquitoes and mosquito populations are monitored throughout the summer months.

As part of the tracking program, the City's Health Department is requesting that the Bristol County project target specific areas for spraying, including public parks and locations that host large public events.

The Bristol County Mosquito Control Project therefore will conduct targeted ground spraying for mosquitoes early in the morning every Thursday beginning June 16, through late September. In the event of rain or inclement weather, the spraying will occur in the early hours of Friday mornings.

The spraying will target areas including Buttonwood Park, Brooklawn Park, Fort Taber, Hazelwood Park, Riverside Park, Clasky Common Park, Ashley Park, the Wing's Court and Custom House Square areas, and the downtown area.

Spraying will take place between 2 a.m. and sunrise on Thursday mornings, weather permitting. Inclement weather will lead to sprayings on Friday mornings. Residents near targeted areas may wish to close their windows on evenings prior to sprayings.

Precautionary measures are advised to prevent EEE, WNV, and the Zika virus.

Precautionary measures include the following:

Avoid Mosquito Bites

> *Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours.* While mosquitoes are out at all hours of the day, their peak biting times are from dusk to dawn. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning. Otherwise, take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing, especially if you work or spend a lot of time outdoors.

> *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 2 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 3 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 tight-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.