
press Release

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monday, August 2, 2010

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**HORSE OWNERS ENCOURAGED TO VACCINATE AGAINST
WEST NILE VIRUS & EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS**

EEE & WNV Detected In Routine Mosquito Testing

The Burlington County Health Department and Mosquito Control Division, in cooperation with the New Jersey Division of Animal Health, recommend that horse owners vaccinate their horses for both Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus in light of mosquito pools testing positive for West Nile Virus and EEE.

"We once again recommend horse owners take preventative steps to protect their animals from the potentially deadly mosquito-borne diseases of West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. The vaccine for West Nile Virus does not protect horses against EEE and vice-versa, so both vaccines are necessary," said Public Health Coordinator Robert Gogats.

It is important to remember that horses are not the source of infection to humans, added Gogats, but horse owners, trainers, and managers can help decrease their horses' exposure to mosquitoes by eliminating standing water in areas including, but not limited to, low lying areas on properties, tire ruts, old tires, and gutters.

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Eastern Equine Encephalitis was detected in a mosquito sample from Bass River Township collected on July 19, 2010. This was the third finding in the State. The first two were in Cape May.

The County found no mosquitoes positive for West Nile Virus during the most recent round of testing. However, a total six positive findings – three each in Maple Shade and Moorestown – were detected previously.

The County Health Department works closely with the N.J. Department of Agriculture's Division of Animal Health in recommending and encouraging horse owners vaccinate their animals against EEE and WNV.

EEE is a rare but serious disease that causes inflammation of the brain tissue and has a significantly higher risk of death than West Nile infection.

To date, no equine cases of WNV or EEE have been identified in the county or state. West Nile virus and EEE, like other viral diseases affecting horses' neurological systems, must be reported to the state veterinarian at (609) 292-3965 within 48 hours.

The Mosquito Control Division continues to treat and monitor mosquito pools throughout the County. For more information about West Nile virus and EEE in horses, visit the NJ Department of Agriculture web site at www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/ah/diseases/equine.html.

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