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## **Governor Rell: State Closely Tracking Cases of EEE-Carrying Mosquitoes**

*Updates Local Officials  
On State's Monitoring, Trapping Program*

In a statewide conference call today, Governor M. Jodi Rell updated local health and chief elected officials on the state's efforts in monitoring the growing number of mosquitoes carrying the potentially deadly Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus.

The virus has been identified in mosquitoes trapped in a number of towns, mostly in rural eastern Connecticut. The Governor was joined on the call by her state commissioners of Environmental Protection, Public Health, Agriculture, Emergency Management and Homeland Security and experts from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

"We have determined that the virus has now been identified in human-biting mosquitoes. It is essential we get the word out to every municipality that citizens must take precautions to avoid mosquito bites over the next few weeks or until mosquito activity significantly drops with the season's first hard frost," Governor Rell said.

Eastern equine encephalitis is a rare but often serious disease in humans. State medical experts today informed local officials that minimizing mosquito exposure is essential because there is no vaccine for humans and the virus can cause deaths in about 30 percent of human cases.

"Connecticut is very fortunate. We have never had a confirmed case in humans and we need to do all we can to keep it that way," Governor Rell said.

The Governor said the presence of mosquitoes carrying the EEE virus is more widespread and greater in numbers than in previous years. EEE in mosquitoes has been confirmed in 12 Connecticut towns this year: **Chester, Guilford, Hampton, Hebron, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, North Branford, North Stonington, Old Lyme,**

**Tolland and Willington.** The virus has also been isolated in a flock of pheasants in **Norwich.**

The virus has also been detected in several Northeast states and there has been a human case in New York and one in New Hampshire. In addition to EEE, the state has also identified West Nile Virus (WNV) positive mosquitoes in 11 towns in Connecticut this year.

The state addressed a similar surge in EEE-mosquito activity in the late 1990s, mostly in southeastern Connecticut. The situation was a serious concern especially after neighboring Rhode Island reported a human death attributed to the virus. Connecticut has never had a confirmed case in humans.

Symptoms of EEE can include high fever, stiff neck, headache and lack of energy. The most serious result of infection is encephalitis, or swelling of the brain, and is fatal in approximately one-third of persons who become ill. Symptoms generally appear from 3 to 10 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

There is a vaccine for horses and state agriculture officials stressed the importance of inoculation. The disease is nearly always fatal in horses. Experts stressed, however, the disease cannot be passed from horses to humans.

State officials said today there are no plans to spray in areas where the EEE-mosquitoes have been trapped because the areas too spacious and, in most cases, very sparsely populated. The state will erect signs in state parks and other state-owned property urging visitors to take precautions that include trying to avoid going outdoors at dusk when mosquitoes are most active. The Governor said state health and environmental officials will continue to closely monitor the situation and provide timely and detailed updates to her and local leaders.

“Precaution and prevention are critical as we get through the final few weeks of the mosquito season,” Governor Rell said.

**Precautions to avoid mosquito bites include:**

- Minimize time outdoors at dusk and dawn.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Clothing material should be tightly woven.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors.
- Consider using mosquito repellent when it is necessary to be outdoors. Always use according to label instructions. The most effective repellents contain DEET or Picaridin. Do not apply to the hands of children or to infants less than 2 months old.

**Additional resources for information on West Nile virus and mosquito management:**

- Connecticut Management Program Web site at [www.ct.gov/mosquito/](http://www.ct.gov/mosquito/)
- The Department of Public Health Web site at [www.dph.state.ct.us](http://www.dph.state.ct.us)
- The Department of Environmental Protection Web site at [www.ct.gov/dep](http://www.ct.gov/dep)

- The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Web site at [www.ct.gov/caes](http://www.ct.gov/caes)
- The Department of Agriculture Web site at [www.ct.gov/doag](http://www.ct.gov/doag)
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)