

EXCERPT FROM DHHS PRESS RELEASE JUNE 2, 2008

On June 2, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services announced the beginning of the statewide Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV) surveillance season. The mosquito testing season runs from June 1 to October 31. In 2007, there were no identified cases of WNV in humans, mosquitoes or animals, but there were 3 human cases, 6 mosquito pools, and 2 animals identified with EEE.

“Due to high EEE and WNV activity in NH during recent years, there is a concern these diseases will again be a health concern in 2008,” said DHHS Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas. “Yet, while EEE and West Nile remain threats to the public, these diseases are preventable so there is no reason to stop enjoying the outdoors. It is essential that people follow the prevention steps, such as using an insect repellent, to avoid becoming infected by one of these viruses.”

This year the State will no longer be performing general wild bird testing. EEE and WNV are well established in New Hampshire so wild bird testing does not assist in determining the location or timing of disease. However, as birds can die from other diseases of concern to the health of public, individuals who find a bird that has died or is dying for reasons other than trauma (i.e., attacked by an animal or hit by a car) may contact the health department for further information. Questions about WNV, EEE, or bird surveillance can also be answered by calling the toll-free West Nile Virus/EEE information line at 866-273-NILE (6453).

The Hollis Health Officer can be reached at 465-6001.