



## TOWN OF WELLESLEY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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### Frequently Asked Questions & Answers about Mosquito-Borne Diseases

#### **What is Wellesley's risk level for EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis) and WNV (West Nile Virus)?**

*Wellesley's current risk level (as of 8/5/2020) is low for both WNV and EEE.* The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) regularly updates the risk level for WNV and EEE for all communities in the state. Several factors are a part of determining the level of risk assigned to a community. These include whether mosquitoes in that community have tested positive for a mosquito-borne disease, and whether there have been any reported animal or human cases of WNV or EEE this season.

#### **How can I check the risk level in Wellesley or elsewhere?**

Here is the map MDPH regularly updates that indicates the risk level in Wellesley. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-arbovirus-update#eee-and-wnv-risk-level-by-city/town>. If you click below each map, you'll see there is a chart (What does my risk level mean?) that indicates the corresponding recommended behavior for that risk level.

#### **How do you know if mosquitoes in Wellesley are carrying diseases?**

The Town of Wellesley, as a part of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project (EMMCP) <https://sudbury.ma.us/emmcp/> regularly traps and tests mosquitoes in the area for a variety of mosquito-borne diseases including both WNV and EEE. Thus far this season, no mosquitoes with WNV or EEE have been found in Wellesley. We do not anticipate EEE to be found in Wellesley mosquitoes. The type of environment where EEE mosquitoes are typically found – white cedar and large red maple swamps – is not common in Wellesley so the risk of EEE in our Town is low.

#### **What are you doing to protect Wellesley residents from mosquito-borne diseases?**

Prevention is an ongoing collaborative effort among the Wellesley Health Dept, the EMMCP and MDPH. Early in the season, EMMCP treats catch basins in the area to prevent mosquitoes in the larval stage from developing. Through EMMCP mosquito traps, the type and volume of mosquitoes are monitored throughout the season and tested for diseases. Additionally, the Health Dept. uses a variety of methods to reach the general public and specific populations with messages about personal prevention such as using mosquito repellent and avoiding outdoor activity during peak mosquito hours.

### **Will you spray for mosquitoes?**

Wellesley does not plan to conduct truck (aerial) spraying for mosquitoes at this time. Residents and the general community will be apprised should the zone for aerial spraying (for neighboring communities at higher risk) include Wellesley.

### **What can I do to protect myself from mosquito-borne disease?**

Apply Insect Repellent when Outdoors. Use a repellent with an **EPA-registered ingredient** (DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), oil of lemon eucalyptus [p-methane 3, 8- diol (PMD)], or IR3535) according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two 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 three 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.

[See this fact sheet about mosquito repellents.](#)

Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours. The hours from **dusk to dawn** are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning if possible.

Clothing Can Help Reduce Mosquito Bites. Wearing long-sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

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 the water in birdbaths frequently.

Install or Repair Screens. Keep mosquitoes outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all your windows and doors.

Information about EEE and WNV and reports of current and historical EEE and WNV virus activity in Massachusetts can be found on the MDPH website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito>

*Updated August 5, 2020*