

West Nile Virus in Peel Aug. 20 - 26, 2006

The following is detailed information about WNV activity within Peel.

West Nile Virus Surveillance Region of Peel 2006	Week of Aug. 20 - 26				Year to Date			
	Total	Brampton	Caledon	Mississauga	Total	Brampton	Caledon	Mississauga
WNV-Positive Crows and Blue Jays	1	0	0	1	11	4	3	4
WNV-Positive Mosquito Pools	5	2	0	3	10	3	0	7
Confirmed Human Cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Probable Human Cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Surveillance

Peel now has a total of 11 WNV-positive birds. The last bird found in Mississauga was confirmed positive last week. With the Canadian Co-operative Wildlife Health Centre (CCWHC) ceasing bird testing once a health unit has confirmed four WNV-positive birds, most Ontario health units are no longer sending birds for testing. In order to continue mapping suspected WNV activity throughout Peel, Peel Public Health is still asking residents to report dead crows or blue jays. The provincial total of WNV-birds is now 236.

There were 66 new WNV-positive mosquito batches in Ontario last week. Five of them were found in Peel, two in Brampton and three in Mississauga, bringing Peel's total to 10. Ontario has 133 positive batches with Toronto leading the way with 38 positive mosquito batches.

Human cases of WNV have doubled in Ontario. There are no confirmed human cases of WNV in Peel, but there are three new human cases, bringing Ontario's total to six; there is a new one in Toronto and one each in Hamilton and Niagara. Canada has 31 human cases of the virus.

Mosquito Reduction

The fourth and final round of larviciding is currently underway. Larviciding will be completed in Brampton and the areas of Mississauga where catch basin vacuuming was undertaken last week by Aug. 31. The catch basin larviciding program for 2006 will officially end on Sept. 1 when Caledon has received treatment for all of its designated catch basins. Catch basins treated in this round of larviciding will be marked with a green paint dot. Catch basin larviciding updates are posted regularly on www.peel-bugbite.ca.

Peel's treatment of surface water such as ditches, culverts and woodlot pools will continue until Sept. 30.

While there are fewer mosquitoes, the percentage of WNV-infected mosquitoes is higher than it has been at any point this summer. This increases the risk of human WNV infection; it is not uncommon for activity to increase dramatically at this time of year.

Peel Public Health reminds residents to take extra precautions against WNV by:

- Avoiding areas with high mosquito populations and take extra precautions at dusk and dawn when mosquito activity is higher
- Wearing light-coloured clothing and cover exposed skin by wearing long sleeves, pants and a hat
- Using a mosquito repellent and follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Draining areas of standing or stagnant water on your property. Remove old tires, turn over pails, toys and wheelbarrows, and frequently change water in birdbaths. Also, keep your eavestroughs clear to avoid trapped water

Residents are also reminded to keep WNV symptoms in mind if they are not feeling well. While most human infections result in no or mild symptoms, the most common symptoms reported from those who contract the virus include extreme tiredness, muscle aches, a fever, frontal headache and a skin rash. More serious symptoms can include neck stiffness, muscle weakness and confusion.

Extreme swelling or infection at the site of a mosquito bite does not mean a person is infected with WNV, but may still require medical attention. Anyone with concerns about a bite or anyone feeling sick should seek medical attention.

Find more information about WNV, protection measures and the Region of Peel's Prevention Plan through:

- Peel Health at 905-799-7700. Caledon residents call toll-free at 905-584-2216
- www.peel-bugbite.ca
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Web site at www.health.gov.on.ca

Megan Ward, MD MHS Sc CCFP FRCPC
Acting Medical Officer of Health
Region of Peel