



# TOWN OF MARBLEHEAD BOARD OF HEALTH

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## WEST NILE VIRUS PROTOCOL & RESPONSE PLAN

### BACKGROUND

West Nile Virus (WNV) was first detected in Massachusetts in 2000 in birds and mosquitoes. During that year there were 448 birds that tested positive for WNV in 94 cities and towns within Massachusetts. To date there have been three (3) human cases with one death identified in Massachusetts.

### PLAN

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is continuing its passive and active surveillance of birds and mosquitoes. The MDPH has established a toll-free hot line for local public health officials and the public to report dead birds. All residents reporting dead birds should be instructed to call the **MDPH WNV Toll Free Hot Line at 866-MASS-WNV (866 627-7968)**.

Community education to increase awareness of personal protection measures to reduce the risk of WNV disease should be instituted in early spring. Removal of standing water near homes is a clear measure to reduce mosquito-breeding sites. Other personal protection measures to be emphasized should include: repair of torn window and door screens, clean gutters and drains, properly maintain pools and pool covers, emptying of any standing water (i.e.: children's wading pools, bird baths, old tires) every day.

Additional measures for personal protection that should be emphasized include: limit time outdoors in the evening when mosquitoes are most active, encourage wearing of protective clothing, use of mosquito repellents (MDPH recommends those containing DEET), (*follow manufactures directions and do not use on infants*), and the use of mosquito netting on carriages and playpens.

In the event that the Town of Marblehead is notified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health that there has been a confirmed positive WNV bird within our community, the Marblehead Board of Health will notify the residents of our town by means of Marblehead Cable TV, (MHTV-10), the Salem Evening News, Lynn Daily Item, Marblehead Reporter, and the town web page, (<http://www.marblehead.com/police/>). The Marblehead Board of Health will also

begin mosquito surveillance by use of a Mosquito Magnet within the location of the reported positive bird.

In addition to these measures the Marblehead Board of Health will intensify public education of WNV disease, source reduction, and personal protection measures by the same means listed above.

If multiple birds and/or a pool of bird biting mosquitoes are identified as carrying the WNV, the Marblehead Board of Health in conjunction with the MDPH will increase mosquito collections in high activity areas, conduct passive live bird surveillance, if appropriate and sanctioned by the MDPH, and will begin active human surveillance. Consideration of additional measures to reduce the breeding habitat of mosquitoes as deemed necessary by the MDPH would be discussed at this time.

With a report from the MDPH of a laboratory-confirmed locally acquired human case of WNV, the Marblehead Board of Health will notify residents of a Public Health Alert with emphasis on personal protection measures especially targeted to high-risk individuals. The Marblehead Board of Health **may**, at this time, consider holding a Public Hearing in regards to spraying high-risk areas.

If multiple human cases, locally acquired and laboratory-confirmed, are identified, the Marblehead Board of Health will recommend restriction of group outdoor activities, especially during the times of early morning and evening when mosquito activity is the highest, and will hold a Public Hearing in regards to spraying high risk neighborhoods, if not already voted at previous hearing. Broadcast spraying will be approved **only** upon a showing that it will be effective in substantially reducing the risk of humans contracting the disease and that the adverse health effects of spraying are outweighed by the benefits of the demonstrated reduced risk of human infection.

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