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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, August 25, 2017
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Arlington Mosquitoes Test Positive for West Nile Virus

ARLINGTON -- Public Health Director Natasha Waden reports that multiple pools of mosquitoes have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) in Arlington.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health announced on Thursday, Aug. 24 that multiple pools of mosquitoes tested positive for the virus in Arlington and surrounding communities.

Although there have been no human cases of WNV detected this year, it is important for residents to be aware and take precautions to prevent mosquito bites.

"Because mosquitos have tested positive for West Nile in town, we advise residents to take extra precautions around their homes and when outside," Waden said. "Always wear insect repellent while outdoors, especially during dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most prevalent."

WNV is most commonly transmitted to humans by the bite of a mosquito infected with the virus. In 2016, there were 16 reported human cases of WNV. While the virus can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe infection.

Arlington works to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes by treating all stormwater catch basins in town and wetland areas, and by working with property owners to remove large sources of standing water like abandoned swimming pools.

Additionally, the Arlington Board of Health recommends the following safety tips to protect against mosquito bites.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home:

- Drain standing water, as that's where mosquitoes lay their eggs. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or discarding items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools, and change water in birdbaths frequently.
- Install or repair screens. Keep mosquitoes outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

Avoid Mosquito Bites:

- Apply insect repellent when outdoors. Use a repellent with 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 percent or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under 3 years old.
- 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.
- Clothing can help reduce mosquito bites. Wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.