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West Nile Virus Confirmed in Mosquito Sample in Peabody

DATE: October 4, 2011

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The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) announced today that West Nile virus (WNV) has been detected in a mosquito sample collected from Peabody, Massachusetts. WNV can be transmitted to humans by the bite of a mosquito infected with the virus. While WNV can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe infection. Please note that there have been no human or animal cases of West Nile Virus identified in Peabody.

By taking a few, common-sense precautions, people can help to protect themselves and their loved ones:

Avoid Mosquito Bites

- **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.
- **Apply Insect Repellent** when you go outdoors. Use a repellent with **DEET** (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), **permethrin**, **picaridin** (KBR 3023), **IR3535** or **oil of lemon eucalyptus** [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)]. These products have restrictions, so make sure to follow the instructions on the product label.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- **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 water in birdbaths frequently.
- **Install or Repair Screens** - Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

The City of Peabody has worked closely with the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control District throughout this season to reduce the risk of illness spread by mosquitoes. Mosquito pools are tested twice weekly from May to September in order to help identify infected mosquitoes. In addition, pesticide treatments of catch basins (where mosquitoes lay their eggs) was performed throughout the City, and spraying of public parks to kill adult mosquitoes was performed in late September. As a result of the identification of this infected mosquito pool, another targeted spraying will occur the week of October 3 in order to reduce the number of mosquitoes breeding up until the first frost.

Information about WNV and reports of WNV activity in Massachusetts during 2010 can be found on the MDPH website at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/wnv>. Recorded information about WNV is also available by calling the MDPH Public Health Information Line at 1-866-MASS-WNV (1-866-627-7968).