

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adirondack Bank Building, 5th Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE



PHYLLIS D. ELLIS, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

ADMINISTRATION

Phone: (315) 798-6400 ☎ Fax: (315) 266-6138 ☎ Email: publichealth@ocgov.net

Contact: Bobbi Kahl, 315-798-5064

Oneida County's First Case of EEE Claims Horse in Town of Trenton

The first case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Oneida County this year has been confirmed, Oneida County Health Department officials said today.

A horse in the Town of Trenton, which was suffering from neurological symptoms associated with EEE, was euthanized on September 8th and subsequent testing confirmed the virus.

"The Health Department has been routinely testing mosquito pools in western Oneida County throughout the summer but had seen no positive specimens to date," Phyllis D. Ellis, Director of Health said. She added, *"This horse was infected with the EEE virus in a portion of Oneida County where EEE has not been detected previously. In the past, EEE has never been detected further east than the western-most boundaries of the City of Rome."*

"People should keep in mind that the species of mosquito found to be infected with EEE is one that generally feeds on birds, but should exercise due diligence when outdoors," Ellis cautioned. She suggests:

- *Use an insect repellent containing DEET.*
- *Wear long sleeves and pants covering as much skin as possible.*
- *Eliminate breeding sites around your home by removing 'standing water' such as wading pools, bird baths, buckets, etc.*
- *Limit outdoor activity during times when mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn.*

Eastern Equine Encephalitis is considered among the most serious mosquito-borne viruses. Horses are susceptible to the illness which almost always proves fatal to the animal. The health department recommends that horses be vaccinated for EEE. If contracted by humans, EEE can produce symptoms ranging from mild flu-like illness to inflammation of the brain, coma and death in about a third of those affected. Currently, there is no EEE vaccine for humans.

According to the health department, positive EEE mosquito pools had previously been reported this year in neighboring Onondaga, Madison, and Oswego Counties with one human exposure in Onondaga County.

For more information on Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) or other mosquito-borne illnesses call the Oneida County Health Department at 798-5064 or visit our website at www.ocgov.net.