

# ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## ADMINISTRATION

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### News Release

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Contact: Environmental Health- 315.798.5064

### Mosquitoes, EEE, West Nile Virus, and Zika Virus

Mosquitoes usually are considered a nuisance pest, but occasionally they can transmit viruses to people and some animals. These viruses can cause illness and even death.

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious viral disease spread by mosquitoes that can affect people and horses. EEE is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected by feeding on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes will then occasionally feed on horses, humans and other mammals. EEE is not spread person-to-person, from people to animals or from animals (other than mosquitoes) to people.

West Nile virus (WNV) is also transmitted to humans and some animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. WNV is a mosquito-borne infection that can cause serious illness, and in some cases, death.

Zika virus disease (Zika) is a disease caused by the Zika virus, which is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito.

There are no human vaccines for EEE, WNV, or Zika. Prevention of mosquito bites is the most important way to reduce your risk of mosquito-borne diseases. Take the following steps to protect yourself:

**Cover your skin as completely as possible when outside when mosquitoes are present and active. Wear long sleeves, pants and socks. Use insect repellent on exposed skin and follow label directions.**

To reduce the mosquito population around your home and property, reduce or eliminate all standing water:

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Dispose of used tires. Used tires are a significant mosquito breeding site.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Remove leaf debris from yards and gardens.
- Turn over wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use
- Change the water in birdbaths twice weekly.
- Clean vegetation and debris from edges of ponds.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Landscape to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

**First come, first served—while supply last**

The Oneida County Health Department (OCHD) has Mosquito Beater made by Bonide to dispense to the community for water holding containers. These are free of charge for Oneida County residents. Residents can pick up product from 185 Genesee Street, 4<sup>th</sup> floor between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. **Limit is one package per**

**household.** These **cannot** be submerged in open or flowing water, and are only for outdoor use. The OCHD is not able to take reservations or hold packages for residents.