



ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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"PROMOTING & PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ONEIDA COUNTY"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Environmental Health 315.798.5064

One Horse Tested Positive for EEE Virus

Oneida County – The Oneida County Health Department reported today that one horse located in the town of Lee, tested positive for the Eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEE). The horse died on September 30, 2019.

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.

Oneida County Public Health Director, Phyllis D. Ellis, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E said, "That it is vital for people to take steps to protect themselves against mosquitoes in all areas of the county." "It is still very important for people to continue their efforts to prevent exposure to mosquitoes."

People should limit their outdoor activities around dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are active; use insect repellents and wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, shoes and socks when outdoors; and eliminate standing water around the home.

Repellents containing DEET are the most effective but need be used with caution and according to label instructions. Products containing picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are also effective.

To reduce mosquito habitat around the home, residents are advised to:

- Repair or replace window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside and reduce or eliminate all standing water.
- Dispose of old tires.
- Empty or dispose of pails, cans, flower pots and similar water-holding containers.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Clear roof gutters and be sure they drain properly.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and wading pools when not in use.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs and drain pool covers.
- Change the water in birdbaths and horse troughs twice a week.
- Remove leaf debris from yards and gardens and clean vegetation and debris from the edge of ponds.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

An EEE vaccine is available for horses and other large animals. Check with your veterinarian to help protect livestock from the virus.

For more information about protecting your family against mosquitoes, call the Oneida County Health Department at 315-798-6400 or visit the New York State Department of Health website at <http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2731/>.

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