

The Regional Municipality of Halton

For Immediate Release
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West Nile Virus Update

The Halton Region Health Department has been carrying out ongoing surveillance for West Nile Virus, including documentation of dead bird sightings. Over the past two weeks there has been an increase in dead birds reported, particularly in Oakville and Burlington, south of the QEW.

Ongoing surveillance and analysis of recent results are occurring. Given the increase in the number of dead bird sightings, preparations are underway in the event spraying of pesticides is required.

While the risk of transmission of West Nile Virus is low, the Health Department is reemphasizing the measures individuals should take to protect themselves against mosquito bites:

- avoid areas with high mosquito populations;
- wear light-coloured clothing, including long sleeves, pants and a hat, to cover exposed skin when outdoors in the evening or early morning;
- use a mosquito repellent containing DEET. The concentration of DEET should be no greater than 30% for adults and no greater than 10% for children between the ages of six months to 12 years. DEET should not be applied to infants under six months of age.
- make sure all windows and doors in your home have screens that are in good condition;
- take extra precaution from dusk to dawn when mosquito activity is particularly high.

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To reduce mosquito breeding areas:

- drain any areas of standing or stagnant water on your property;
- remove old tires;
- turn over pails, toys and wheelbarrows;
- change the water in birdbaths every few days;
- keep your eaves-troughs clear to avoid trapped water.

Throughout the warm weather, monitor and maintain your yard to ensure that the area remains free from standing water.

For more information about West Nile Virus, please call the Halton Region Health Department West Nile Virus Line at: 905-825-6187, Toll free: 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866) TTY 905-827-9833 or visit our Web site at www.region.halton.on.ca/health <<http://www.region.halton.on.ca/health>>. Fact sheets are posted on the Web site.

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