

Case of West Nile Virus reported in Mississauga

Peel Public Health has identified its first human case of West Nile virus for 2017.

The Region reported the case Friday, stating it was in central Mississauga.

This case reinforces the need for all residents to protect themselves from mosquito bites, Peel's Director of Health Protection Paul Callanan said. Most people who contract the disease will show no symptoms, but 20 per cent will experience mild flu-like symptoms, and about one in 150 people will develop a more severe form of the disease.

Residents are encouraged to protect themselves from mosquito bites by avoiding areas with high mosquito populations and take extra precautions at dusk and dawn when mosquito activity is highest. They should wear light-coloured clothing that covers exposed skin, such as long sleeves, pants and a hat. They should also use insect repellent containing DEET and apply it according to the manufacturer's directions.

As well, residents should remove or drain items on their properties that hold stagnant water. Water that is stagnant for more than seven days is an ideal breeding site for mosquitoes.

The Peel health department reports a mosquito pool in Caledon was found to be positive for the virus earlier this month.

That brings to three the total number of positive pools found in town so far this season. As of Sept. 2, there had been 53 positive pools found in Brampton and 42 in Mississauga.

The health department reported the adult mosquito surveillance program started in June. Adult mosquitoes are collected weekly from mosquito traps at 33 fixed locations throughout the region, and this will continue until later this month. To date, 831 mosquito batches have been tested for WNV and 98 have tested positive.

The larviciding program also started in June and will continue until Sept. 30.

Larviciding involves applying environmentally-friendly products to reduce mosquito larvae in stagnant water.

The third round of larviciding is ongoing. The first round was indicated by a blue dot on the catch basin grate, the second round by a purple dot and the third round is indicated by a green dot. It takes at least three weeks to complete a round of larviciding. There will be three rounds of roadside catch basin larviciding this year.

Larviciding of catch basins in the green spaces of parks in Peel has been completed. The treatment of surface water sites on public lands is ongoing.