

Sign up to get emailed updates on West Nile Virus activity in Peel

Peel Public Health will be giving residents the opportunity to be notified by email this year on West Nile Virus activity in the region.

The email notifications will list areas in Peel where positive West Nile Virus activity has been found, commented Peel's Director of Environmental Health Paul Callanan. Knowing where West Nile Virus is present will help residents decide if they should take extra precautions to protect themselves against infection.

To reduce the chance of being bitten by a mosquito, residents are encouraged to avoid areas with high mosquito populations and take extra precautions at dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active; wear light-coloured clothing that covers exposed skin, such as long sleeves, pants and a hat; and use insect repellent and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

There are things residents can do now to help prevent West Nile Virus, including removing or draining items around their property that can hold stagnant water, Callanan observed. Water that is stagnant for over seven days is an ideal breeding site for mosquitoes, especially as the weather gets warmer. With residents' help, we can reduce the mosquito population and reduce the risk of West Nile Virus infection in Peel.

Residents can report stagnant water sites to Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700 or online at peel-bugbite.ca

Peel Public Health's 2013 WNV prevention program, which began this week, includes collecting and testing adult mosquitoes weekly, and monitoring stagnant water sites on public property for mosquito larvae. If larvae are found, an environmentally friendly larvicide will be used to eliminate the larvae. Peel Public Health will also complete three rounds of larviciding in roadside catch basins throughout Peel.

For more information about how to eliminate mosquito breeding sites, and protection from WNV, visit peel-bugbite.ca or call Peel Public Health at 905-584-2216.