

Still no WNV activity reported in Caledon

As Peel Public Health's mosquito reduction program to combat West Nile Virus (WNV) winds down, there's still be no activity in Caledon.

The Region reported that for the week ending Sept. 10, there had been 59 WNV-positive mosquito pools found in Peel, and none of them have been in Caledon. There were 37 in Brampton and 22 in Mississauga. That week saw three more pools found in Brampton and one in Mississauga.

There have been no human cases of WNV reported in Peel, although there have been 14 reported cases of WNV illness in Ontario, including 10 cases in Toronto, three in Niagara Region and one in York. As well, there have been 11 human cases in Manitoba and one each in Quebec and Saskatchewan. To date, there are 537 human cases of WNV in the United States.

Peel's adult mosquito surveillance program started in June. Adult mosquitoes are collected weekly from mosquito traps at 31 fixed locations throughout the region until late September.

To date, 748 mosquito batches have been tested for WNV.

Mosquito-reduction larviciding involves applying environmentally-friendly products to reduce mosquito larvae in stagnant water. Peel's program started in June and will continue until Sept. 30.

It takes three weeks to complete a round of larviciding. The third round of catch basin larviciding was completed Sept. 1. The third round is indicated by a green dot affixed to the catch basin grate.

The Region is reminding residents they can reduce the risk of WNV by removing stagnant water on their property. Empty or dispose of containers that can hold water, such as old tires, wheelbarrows, barrels, pails, toys and recycling bins; turn over wading pools, remove water that collects on pool covers; and make sure swimming pool pumps are circulating.

People can also protect themselves from being bitten by mosquitoes by avoiding areas with large numbers of mosquitoes; wearing light-coloured clothing, including long sleeves, long pants, socks and a hat whenever outdoors (even in the backyard), especially at dusk and at dawn; and using an insect repellent and applying it according to the manufacturer's directions.

Symptoms of WNV may include fever, muscle weakness, stiff neck, confusion, severe headaches and a sudden sensitivity to light. In rare cases, the virus can cause serious neurological illness including encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain.