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## West Nile virus found in Halton Region

A batch of mosquitoes collected last week in Oakville has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). This is the first batch of positive mosquitoes found in Halton Region this year. The mosquitoes were collected from the area of Cornwall and Chartwell Roads in the Town of Oakville.

“Positive mosquitoes are a key indicator of the risk of human West Nile virus infection. Hot, dry summers are perfect for West Nile virus. The months of August and September are the peak risk months,” said Dr. Monir Taha, Halton Region Associate Medical Officer of Health. “Halton residents should keep taking precautions like covering up, using insect repellent with DEET, and avoiding the outdoors during peak mosquito activity.”

Mosquitoes can transmit WNV to humans after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of birds carrying the virus. Older adults and people with underlying illnesses should be particularly cautious as they are more likely to develop the illness. The following are steps that residents can take to protect themselves and their families

from mosquitoes:

- Cover up. Wear light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts and pants with tightly-woven fabric.
- Avoid being outdoors from early evening to morning when mosquitoes are most active and



likely to bite, as well as at any time in shady, wooded areas.

- Reduce mosquito breeding sites around your home by getting rid of all water-filled containers and objects.

Change the water in bird baths at least once per week.

- Use an approved insect repellent, such as one containing DEET.

Maps showing the locations of positive mosquito pools, as well as standing water sites that have had larvicide applied are available on the Health Department's website at [www.halton.ca/wnv](http://www.halton.ca/wnv).

To report standing water or for more information about West Nile virus, please dial 311 or call Halton Region at 905-825-6000, toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866), TTY 905-827-9833 or e-mail [wnv@halton.ca](mailto:wnv@halton.ca).

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