

Residents encouraged to report dead bird sightings Region begins West Nile program

With the weather getting warmer, the Region is kicking off its West Nile virus (WNV) control program for the season.

The health department started its dead bird surveillance Monday, (May 14), and is asking residents to help track the presence of WNV in Halton by reporting dead bird sightings.

This can be done by calling the health department at 905-825-6000 or e-mailing wNV@halton.ca. When reporting a dead bird, it's important to provide as much of the following information as possible:

- Type or description of the bird
- Address or closest intersection to where the bird is located
- The length of time the bird has been there.

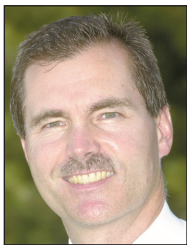
Dead crows and blue jays may be collected by staff and submitted for viral testing if suitable. If the bird isn't going to be picked up, staff will give instructions on how to dispose of it safely.

The health department says while it's interested in sightings of all dead birds, it won't be collecting every one.

"We encourage residents to do their part by reporting dead bird sightings and removing standing water from their properties," said Regional Chair Gary Carr. "By doing these things, Halton residents can and do make an

impact in helping to safeguard the health of our community."

Standing water that has been sitting for seven days or more can create an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes. It often collects in objects like birdbaths, old tires, toys, plant saucers or clogged eavestroughs. Residents are encouraged to ensure water doesn't accumulate in these types of objects or remove them when possible.



DR. BOB NOSAL

The Region will begin its mosquito larviciding program when staff has identified mosquito larvae in catch basins or areas of standing water.

Notices regarding the start of surface water larviciding will be placed in local newspapers before it begins. In addition, signs will be posted at the sites when larvicides are applied.

The locations will be listed at www.halton.ca/wNV.

"Bird and mosquito surveillance activities and larviciding are all parts of our comprehensive control program," said Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal.

He noted that the health department has consistently found WNV activity in Halton's bird population since 2001 and the mosquito population since 2002.

There was only one case of WNV diagnosed in a Halton resident last year.

Firm gets \$52,000 to design park's next phase

Sernas Associates of Mississauga will be paid \$52,470 to do engineering consulting work to design the next phase of the Trafalgar Rd. Sports Park— a baseball diamond,

parking, lighting and grading. The whole project, \$515,000, is being completed as a joint venture with the Georgetown Slopitch League, which contributed \$100,000.

Region will donate unwanted computers

Computers no longer needed by Region staff will now get a second chance in the community through a program recently started by the municipality.

Through the new initiative, desktop and laptop computers that have been deemed surplus by the Region will be donated to non-profit groups in Halton.

"The real winners in this program are students and people in need right here in our community who can use technology to learn and enrich their lives," said Regional Chair Gary Carr.

Educational charities and not-for-profits in Halton will be given priority for the receipt of

the refurbished computers.

The computer donation program is being delivered in partnership with Renewed Computer Technology (RCT), a not-for-profit, charitable organization.

"We commend Halton Region for further leveraging their technology investment to help strengthen not-for-profits and provide youth with valuable hands-on work experience through our programs," said RCT Executive Director Shauna L. McCaffrey. "Reusing technology not only benefits communities but protects the environment from harmful electronic waste."

To find out more information or to request computers visit RCT's website at www.rcto.ca.

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