



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

80 State Highway 310, Suite 2 ■ Canton, New York 13617-1476

Phone: (315) 386-2325 ■ Fax: (315) 386-2203

Press Release

Date: August 6, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: **Jenna Thompson**

jthompson@stlawco.gov

315-386-2325

Two Horses Identified with Eastern Equine Encephalitis in St. Lawrence County

Canton, NY — St. Lawrence County Public Health is advising residents to take extra precautions to avoid mosquito bites after two horses tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), a virus that can cause serious and life-threatening illness. The affected horses were from Norwood and Brasher Falls.

The EEE virus is transmitted by mosquitoes and can infect people, horses, and other mammals, as well as some birds, reptiles, and amphibians. This very rare, but serious, virus can cause inflammation of the brain, also known as encephalitis. It is important to consult a trusted veterinarian about vaccinating horses against EEE.

EEE vaccination is very effective at preventing clinical disease in horses. Vaccination needs to be repeated at a minimum on an annual basis; consult with your veterinarian regarding boosters. To reduce exposure to mosquitoes for horses: eliminate any standing water (mosquito habitat) and place fans inside where the horses rest, limit outdoor activities at dawn and dusk, and use equine-approved mosquito repellent.

In the United States, an average of 11 human cases of EEE are reported annually. In New York State, there have been 11 confirmed human cases since 1971.

Increased rainfall can create more stagnant water, which is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. To avoid mosquito breeding near your property, the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department advises taking the following measures: ensure your roof gutters drain correctly and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall. Remove or turn over any items that may hold stagnant water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers to prevent mosquitoes from breeding. Clear vegetation and waste from the edge of ponds.

To avoid mosquito bites, take precautions during their peak activity hours from dusk until dawn. Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, socks, and shoes. Use mosquito repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535. Do not apply repellent directly to children; instead, apply it to your own hands and then rub it onto your child. Avoid applying to your face and wash your skin and clothing thoroughly after coming indoors.

For more information on EEE, please call the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department at 315-386-2325 or visit:



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

80 State Highway 310, Suite 2 ■ Canton, New York 13617-1476

Phone: (315) 386-2325 ■ Fax: (315) 386-2203

New York State Department of Health's website:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/eastern_equine_encephalitis/fact_sheet.htm

Center for Disease Control website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/easternequineencephalitis/index.html#:~:text=EEE%20virus%20is%20a%20rare,survivors%20have%20ongoing%20neurologic%20problems.>

###