



## **Communications Tools for Communities at MODERATE RISK for Mosquito-Borne Illness**

**July 2012**

DPH is urging residents who live in areas of elevated risk to take personal protective measures to protect themselves against mosquito bites. When educating your residents about the importance of these measures, you can refer to the following messages based on your current risk level:

### Moderate Risk Level

- Wear mosquito repellent when outdoors
- Weather permitting, wear long sleeves and long pants when outdoors during peak mosquito hours (from dusk to dawn)
- Use mosquito netting on baby carriages and playpens outdoors
- Repair window and door screens in your home
- Dump standing water twice weekly
- Arrange neighborhood cleanups to get rid of mosquito breeding sites
- Be aware of stagnant water on private property (e.g. unused swimming pools)- these should be reported to your local Board of Health.

\* Be sure to regularly check the DPH website <http://westnile.ashtonweb.com/> to see if any changes have been made to your area's risk level.

Following, are some suggestions on how to share this information with your communities:

1. Disseminate the recently updated "Preventing Mosquito Bites" educational brochure in your community: <http://maclearinghouse.com/>. Distribute copies at your local library, town hall, grocery store, pharmacy, senior center, community centers and at outdoor events. Make sure that local doctor's offices, hospitals, nursing homes and day care centers have the updated version available for their patients and families. Instructions on how to order free copies can be found on our website.

2. Ask these same locations to display DPH posters which encourage residents to use bug spray. Hang the posters around your community on bulletin boards in local business, public transportation locations, parks and playgrounds. Posters can be downloaded for free from our website: [www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito](http://www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito) .

3. Include a link to the DPH Arbovirus Website: [www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito](http://www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito) and DPH blog: <http://publichealth.blog.state.ma.us/> on your town website.

4. In the coming weeks, DPH will provide you with draft press releases you can submit to your local newspaper about the best ways for people to protect themselves from mosquito bites. In addition, DPH officials are always available to speak with your local media outlets about these issues and what the state is doing to protect residents throughout mosquito season.

5. Ask to appear on your local cable access TV channel to discuss mosquito safety. Request to submit a list of questions ahead of time that highlight the need for personal protective measures. DPH is happy to assist with writing these questions.

6. Draft a "cable announcement" that can be added to your local cable access TV rolling announcements about personal protection measures. Include the DPH website as a place to find additional information.

6. If residents call you with concerns, encourage them to visit our website and review the WNV Fact Sheet, EEE Fact Sheet, and the FAQ about aerial spraying to reduce the risk of EEE. These can all be found at [www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito](http://www.mass.gov/dph/mosquito).