

# **TOWN OF LUNENBURG TOWN MANAGER**



**Jennifer Warren-Dyment, Town Manager**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 16, 2025

## **FIRST CONFIRMED ANIMAL CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN MASSACHUSETTS THIS YEAR DETECTED IN LUNENBURG GOAT**

(LUNENBURG, MA)- On July 15<sup>th</sup>, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) confirmed the first confirmed case of West Nile virus in an animal in Massachusetts this year. The animal- a goat- resided on Goodrich Road in Lunenburg.

“Out of an abundance of caution, the Central Mass. Mosquito Control Project will conduct targeted off-cycle spraying of the area of Town where the goat resided,” stated Matthew Proctor, Chair of the Lunenburg Board of Health. “Spraying is scheduled this evening, after 8:30 p.m., and will include portions of the following streets: Lancaster Ave, Goodrich Street, Kilburn Street, Leominster Road, Brown Drive, Savage Drive, Fish Street, Lincoln Street, Town Street, Sunset Avenue, Cross Road, Pine Grove Road, Laurel Lane, and Prospect Street.”

In addition to spraying, the Central Mass. Mosquito Control Project is deploying additional traps in the area for submission to DPH for viral testing. They will continue larval control efforts in the area concentrating on stormwater areas, containers, and catch basins. Residents outside of the targeted spraying area that would like to have their property sprayed can make a request to Central Mass Mosquito Control at (<https://www.cmmcp.org>) and they will be included in spraying next Monday.

“Residents are advised to take steps to protect themselves from mosquito bites,” said Town Manager Jennifer Warren-Dyment. “This includes using insect repellent, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants, treating clothing when appropriate, and eliminating standing water around homes to reduce mosquito breeding grounds.”

West Nile virus is the leading cause of mosquito-borne disease in the continental United States. It is primarily spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people infected with West Nile virus experience no symptoms. However, approximately 1 in 5 develop fever and flu-like symptoms, and about 1 in 150 develop a serious, sometimes fatal, illness.

West Nile virus is not spread through direct contact with infected people, birds or animals. “While the Lunenburg goat tested positive for the virus, the cause of death has not yet been confirmed,” said Warren-Dyment. The towns of Lunenburg, Leominster, Shirley, and Fitchburg have been raised to moderate risk by the DPH.

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