



News from the Office of  
ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

## NEWS RELEASE

**Health Commissioner  
Dr. Gale Burstein**

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### **BURSTEIN BUZZING ABOUT INCREASED MOSQUITO AWARENESS**

*Hot Weather, Recent Rains Facilitate Breeding; Commissioner Urges Prevention, Protection*

**ERIE COUNTY, NY**— Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein today reminded Erie County residents about the dangers of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile Virus (“WNV”), both of which can be reduced through homeowners’ attention to potential mosquito breeding sites on their property and through other preventative measures. To date, no residents have tested positive for WNV in either Erie County or New York State in 2013.

“Summer is here, and with more people outdoors there is an increased chance of contact with mosquitoes,” **said Burstein**. “We can all work to minimize mosquito contact with our skin by using insect repellent containing 30-50% DEET for adults and 10-30% DEET for children over 2 months of age when we can, and also by wearing a long sleeve shirt and long pants during the evening hours, when we should be most aware of the presence of mosquitoes. Parents should remember to ensure that their children are protected, too. To help in eliminating the mosquito burden in your immediate area, dump out standing water, clean clogged gutters, and change the water in birdbaths and planter bases every 2 days.”

The Erie County Department of Health (“ECDOH”) recommends several other strategies to “Fight Mosquitoes One Yard at a Time”, including maintaining swimming pools by chlorinating and filtering; keeping pool covers drained; maintaining ornamental ponds by stocking them with fish and using bubblers and fountains, which prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs; turning over containers, buckets, and wading pools to eliminate stagnant water; removing used tires from property; and repairing window and door screens as necessary.

**Burstein continued**, “People at higher risk from mosquito bites are the immune-compromised, the elderly, and the very young. When residents are outside, they should use common sense and be aware of the environments that mosquitoes thrive in: stagnant, standing water and weeds and tall grass and shrubbery, which provide protection for them. Please remember to dress appropriately, use insect repellent, and stay away from mosquito-prone areas whenever possible.”

In 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) concluded that appropriate use of DEET at concentrations of up to 30% posed no significant risk to children or adults but that DEET should not be used on children younger than 2 months of age because of increased skin permeability. Products with DEET concentrations of <10% should not be used for exposures lasting more than 1-2 hours.

**For more information:**

On the Erie County Department of Health, visit <http://www2.erie.gov/health/>

On the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/WestNileVirus/>

On the American Academy of Pediatrics, visit

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Insect-Repellants.aspx>

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