

# Southborough Public Health & Safety Departments

Fire, Police, Public Health & Emergency Management

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## **SOUTHBOROUGH WARNS OF MOSQUITO-BORNE VIRUSES**

*EEE Risk level raised to critical*



Photo credit: Massachusetts Department of Public Health

SOUTHBOROUGH, MA – The Southborough Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), in conjunction with the Southborough Board of Health (SBOH) is issuing a warning to residents to take steps to protect themselves against mosquito-borne viruses.

On Friday, August 16, 2019, a resident of Grafton, MA tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (commonly known as EEE), the second confirmed case in Massachusetts. In addition, a number of mosquitoes in the area have tested positive for the virus. Based on these factors, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has raised the EEE risk to “critical” the highest risk category, in Southborough, Hopkinton, Grafton, Northbridge, Shrewsbury, Upton, and Westborough. The threat of mosquito-borne viruses usually lasts until the first hard frost.

According to the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), approximately a third of those who develop EEE will die and many who survive will have mild to severe permanent neurological damage. EEE typically has an incubation period of 4-10 days after bitten by an infected mosquito. Symptoms may include headaches, fever, muscle stiffness, irritability, and vomiting and may progress to disorientation, inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) and coma. There is no specific antiviral treatment for EEE.

Effective immediately, to ensure the public's health, **all Town owned outdoor properties will be closed between the hours of 6:00pm and 6:00am.** These closures will remain in effect until the Town issues an official notification that the health risk has subsided.

For all non-public spaces, SEMA strongly recommends that residents take precautions when outdoors and limit outside activities during common times and environments with mosquito activity, especially at dusk, dawn and in swampy and wooded areas.

Specific preventive measures include:

- Applying repellents that contain DEET on those for whom it is safe. Read product labels carefully for restrictions;
- Whenever possible, avoid outdoor activities at dawn and dusk;
- Rid your surroundings of any standing water (tires, pools, barrels, etc.);
- Use mosquito nets on baby carriages;
- Make sure that all your screens are in good repair and that all openings to the outside are equipped with screens or kept closed;
- Wear long sleeves and pants (light colors are better than dark colors or black);
- Do not allow standing water to remain in small pools and outdoor containers.

To learn more about the health effects, prevention, and updated confirmed risk areas and communities of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), please reference the below resources.

Technical Fact Sheets: Eastern Equine Encephalitis:

- Center for Disease and Control (CDC):
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/easternequineencephalitis/tech/factsheet.html>
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)
  - <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/eee-eastern-equine-encephalitis>

Massachusetts State Map of Mosquitoes Borne Virus Risk Levels:

- <http://www.mosquitoresults.com/>

Area Mosquito Spraying:

- Central Mass. Mosquito Project:
  - <https://www.cmmcp.org/>

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