

Limited Time, Limited Resources: The Logistics of Launching a West Nile Virus Campaign

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Introduction

- **Maine WNV campaign context**
 - To serve as a 'blueprint' for risk communication planning
- **Overview of WNV campaign**
 - Conducted formative research with general public and providers in Maine
 - Developed campaign messages and vehicles
 - Implemented campaign using "tiered" approach
 - Evaluated process

Formative Research: Overview

- Focus groups with general public across Maine
- Interviews with providers
- Goal of research was to explore:
 - What Maine residents/providers *currently know* about WNV
 - What they *want* to know
 - What Maine residents would do to *protect themselves*
 - *How* Maine residents and providers want to receive WNV information

Formative Research: Findings

- What do Maine residents and providers *currently know* about WNV?
 - Low level of knowledge about WNV
 - Most did not consider WNV a serious health problem
- What do Maine residents/providers *want* to know about WNV?
 - Basics of transmission and protection

Formative Research: Findings

- What would Maine residents do to *protect themselves* from WNV?
 - Would eliminate breeding grounds at home
 - Would report dead birds to help tracking effort
 - Mixed reactions to using DEET
 - Would NOT wear long sleeves or stay indoors at dawn & dusk

Formative Research: Findings

- *How* do Maine residents and providers want to receive WNV information?

Public:

- TV, radio, newspapers, Internet, direct mail
- Physicians

Providers:

- CDC, EPA
- Own professional organization or leader

WNV Campaign: Overview

Media:

- **TV PSA**
- **Radio PSA**
- **Newspaper ads**

Direct Mail:

- **Brochures and posters to organizations serving people over 50**
- **Postcard to providers**

WNV Campaign: Development

- **Two challenges:**
 - 1. To raise public awareness of WNV risk without causing alarm**
 - 2. To increase visibility of BOH with general public and providers**


WNV Campaign: Implementation

1. To raise public awareness of WNV risk without causing alarm:

- Different 'levels' of messages depending on severity of WNV risk

- Examples:
(newspaper advertisements)

Maine.
The Great Outdoors.
Mosquitoes.




West Nile Virus?


West Nile virus is spread by mosquitoes.
Mosquitoes get the virus from infected birds.
Most mosquito bites DO NOT cause illness
... but play it safe.

- 1. TRACK West Nile virus in Maine.**
Report dead birds to the Maine Bureau of Health at 1-888-637-4346.
- 2. PROTECT yourself from mosquito bites.**
Cover up and consider repellent with DEET.
- 3. REDUCE mosquitoes around your home.**
Eliminate water where they breed.

For more information contact the
Maine Bureau of Health
www.MainePublicHealth.org
207-287-5301



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Most mosquito bites DO NOT cause illness
... but play it safe.

People over 50 and people with weakened immune systems are most at risk for illness.

- 1. PROTECT yourself from mosquito bites.**
 - ◆ Consider repellent with DEET
 - ◆ Cover up
 - ◆ Avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk
- 2. REDUCE mosquitoes around your home.**
 - ◆ Eliminate water where they breed
 - ◆ Clear clogged gutters
 - ◆ Repair screens





For more information contact the
Maine Department of Human Services,
Bureau of Health
www.MainePublicHealth.org
207-287-5301



Poster

Brochure

Maine.
The Great Outdoors.
Mosquitoes.
West Nile Virus?

Reduce Your Risk of West Nile Virus:

- Reduce Mosquitoes Around Your Home
- Avoid Your Own Personal Mosquito Bites


Help Track West Nile Virus in Maine:

- Report Your Bite



To report a dead bird, visit www.maine.gov/ehh/health.org or call 1-800-697-5846.

Play it safe.

For more information, contact the Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health Care at www.MainePublicHealth.org 207-287-5301



Maine.
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West Nile Virus?

What is DEET?


DEET is a chemical found in some insect repellents. Products containing DEET are effective in repelling mosquitoes. DEET does not significantly affect skin health, and when used in accordance with the label, it does not contain ingredients containing insect repellents containing DEET.

- Read all instructions on the label before applying.
- Do NOT apply DEET directly to children. Apply to your face, hands and feet before the child. Reapply more as children could sweat or become very hot.
- Avoid children using DEET. DEET is safe on skin, but should contain no more than 30% DEET.
- If you believe you or a child is having an adverse reaction to a repellent containing DEET, seek the nearest emergency room and call your health care provider or a poison control center.

Resources

For more information about DEET, West Nile virus and other updates, visit www.maine.gov/ehh/health.org or the Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health Care, 207-287-5301.

To report a dead bird, visit www.maine.gov/ehh/health.org or call 1-888-697-5846.



What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile virus is a disease that can be fatal in some cases. It is spread by mosquitoes. In the United States, West Nile virus was first identified in 1937. Since then, it has spread to many other areas, including Maine.

How is West Nile Virus Spread?

West Nile virus is spread by the bite of a infected mosquito. The mosquito gets its virus from a bird or animal that has the virus in its blood.

West Nile virus is not spread from one person to another or from an animal to a human.

How Serious is West Nile Virus?

Most people infected with West Nile virus experience no illness or very mild illness. However, about 1 in 5 people infected with West Nile virus will experience a more serious illness.

People over 50 and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to experience a more serious illness from West Nile virus infection.

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How Can I Protect Myself and My Family?

Reduce Mosquitoes Around Your Home

- Mosquitoes breed in water. Remove or empty standing water.
- Trim grass, bushes and trees near your home.
- Dry your tires and remove standing water.
- Clean gutters.
- Tidy your yard, remove and make sure you dispose of tires, tires and other debris.
- Changing the source of bird feeders.

Protect Your Family Against Mosquito Bites

- The most effective way to keep mosquitoes away is to use repellents.
- Use repellents containing DEET.
- Wear long pants, long sleeves and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Avoid being outdoors at dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.
- If you are not taking any other West Nile virus precautions, always use repellents during outdoor activities.
- Keep your car in good repair.

Is There a Treatment for West Nile Virus?

There is no specific treatment other than caring for the symptoms of the virus.

What are the Symptoms of West Nile Virus?


Most people infected with West Nile virus experience no illness or very mild illness. However, about 1 in 5 people infected with West Nile virus will experience a more serious illness.

Is West Nile Virus in My Area?

To find out if West Nile virus is in your area, visit the Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Health Care at www.maine.gov/ehh/health.org.

How Does the Maine Department of Human Services Track West Nile Virus?

The Maine Department of Human Services tracks the disease by collecting and testing blood samples. To help the Department of Human Services track West Nile virus in Maine, please report dead birds. The Bureau of Health Care provides information for West Nile virus. Call 1-800-697-5846 or visit the website www.maine.gov/ehh/health.org for more information about the spread of West Nile virus.



WNV Campaign: Implementation


2. To increase visibility of BOH with general public and providers:
 - Changed BOH website url to www.MainePublicHealth.org
 - Provider postcard mailing invited providers to the BOH website

Outcomes

- **Campaign:**
 - Increased hits to the website and calls to hotline
 - Received favorable reports from news media
- **Campaign Process:**
 - **Highlighted risk communication issues to be addressed:**
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Details are critical (data sources, mailing lists)



Outcomes

- Groundwork laid for effective emergency communication with public and providers
 - Channels of communication tested
 - BOH visibility increased
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