

## Exeter Boro

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**To:** Exeter Borough Residents; July 27; 2023  
**Subject:** Info from the Luzerne County Conservation District

On June 6, the first Jamestown Canyon Virus (JCV) positive mosquito pools were collected in Pennsylvania in Luzerne County under the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection mosquito surveillance program. The mosquitos were collected in traps set by the Luzerne Conservation District in West Wyoming and Forty Fort Boroughs. In the following weeks, JCV positive samples were also collected in traps set in Exeter Borough. These mosquito positive pools indicate JCV is circulating in Pennsylvania and infection in residents is possible.

Adhering to our Mosquito-borne Disease Control grant scope-of-work, our office has been proactive in surveying mosquito populations by setting mosquito traps throughout Luzerne County. After collecting mosquito counts exceeding thresholds established in our grant in your municipalities, we conducted a series of barrier pesticide sprays. We also increased mosquito larvae surveillance, surveying areas of standing water (woodland pools, drainage ditches, artificial containers, etc.) and treating these areas with larvicide when larvae are found. This helps reduce the emergence of adult mosquitos. Our office will continue to be diligent in monitoring and controlling the mosquito populations in your municipalities, and the rest of the county to reduce the risk of JCV, West Nile Virus, and other mosquito-borne diseases.

Jamestown Canyon Virus is spread to people by infected mosquitoes. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on deer or other animals that have the virus in their blood. Infected mosquitoes can then spread the virus to people by biting them. Although new to Pennsylvania, the virus is found throughout much of the United States, with most cases historically reported from the upper Midwest. In the United States, an average of 17 JCV neuroinvasive disease cases are reported each year. There is significant under-diagnosis and under-reporting of less severe cases of JCV disease. The Pennsylvania Department of Health has reported one JCV human illness in Pennsylvania since 2003.

Similar to West Nile Virus, many people infected with JCV do not have symptoms. For people with symptoms, the time from mosquito bite to feeling sick (incubation period) ranges from a few days to 2 weeks. Initial symptoms can include fever, fatigue, and headache. Some people also have respiratory symptoms such as cough, sore throat, or runny nose. JVC can cause severe disease, including infection of the brain (encephalitis) or the membranes around the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). Symptoms of severe disease can include stiff neck, confusion, loss of coordination, difficulty speaking, or seizures. Deaths associated with JCV infection are rare. There are no vaccines to prevent or medicines to treat JCV infection. You can reduce your risk of infection by using insect repellent and wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants to prevent mosquito bites.

We advise you to take the precautions noted and seek medical attention should you suffer symptoms. Thank you for your attention to this matter.



Amy Sorokin Huntington  
Exeter Borough Manager  
1101 Wyoming Avenue  
Exeter, PA 18643  
(570) 654-3001 x4  
[exeterboro@comcast.net](mailto:exeterboro@comcast.net)