

This week's email provides information on Massachusetts' recent state of emergency and an update on West Nile Virus.

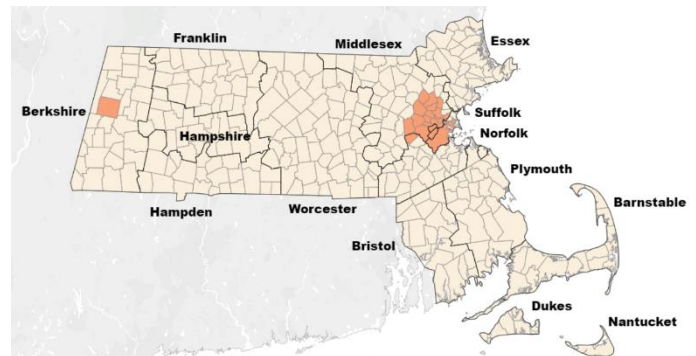
State of Emergency

On Tuesday, August 8, 2023, Governor Healey declared a state of emergency in Massachusetts due to rapidly rising numbers of migrant families arriving in Massachusetts in need of shelter and services and a severe lack of shelter availability in the state. The declaration serves as a notice to the federal government and the Commonwealth that the state's shelter system is rapidly expanding capacity in an unsustainable manner, and that further assistance is urgently needed. There are currently nearly 5,600 families or more than 20,000 individuals in a state shelter, including children and pregnant women. This has increased from 3,100 families, just a year ago. In addition, over 80 cities and towns across the state are hosting families, including more than 1,800 families who are currently residing in shelters and motels. Meanwhile, the number of families leaving emergency shelter for safe, permanent housing has dwindled, in large part due to a lack of affordable housing options. In Governor Healey's statement, she called on the federal government to take urgent action to streamline and expedite work authorizations and increase funding to states to assist in providing shelter and services to families. Information about how the public can help is available at www.mass.gov/sheltercrisis.

For the full press release, click here: [Governor Healey Declares State of Emergency, Calls for Support for Newly Arriving Migrant Families | Mass.gov](#)

West Nile Virus Update

As of August 10th, there have been 39 positive mosquito samples for West Nile Virus. These samples have been collected in many towns across the state, including Worcester County. There have been no animal or human cases of West Nile Virus. The risk for WNV remains low in Central Massachusetts, however the risk is moderate in many towns in Middlesex County, Suffolk County, and Norfolk County (indicated by the orange shading). We will continue to monitor the situation in our region and report new data we receive from MDPH.



- Use a mosquito repellent with an EPA-registered ingredient, anytime you are outdoors. More information on choosing and using repellents safely is included in the [MDPH Mosquito Repellents fact sheet](#).
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks to reduce exposed skin when weather permits.
- Repair window and door screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home.
- Drain standing water in and around your house or yard to prevent mosquito breeding.

For more information about preventing mosquito and tickborne illness, visit DPH's [Mosquitoes and Ticks](#) page and CDC's [Mosquitoes](#) page.

