

**GEORGE LATIMER, Westchester County Executive**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFERS MORE FREE MINNOWS FOR POND OWNERS**

*Minnows, dunks and education are part of the County's mosquito prevention strategy*

(White Plains, NY) – To prevent mosquitoes from multiplying, the Westchester County Health Department will give away another 200 pounds of fathead minnows this Friday and Saturday, to residents who have ponds or water features.

The Health Department distributed 250 pounds of the tiny baitfish to 89 people earlier this month. Along with the minnows, the Department will share mosquito dunks and other strategies to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile Virus.

The minnows and mosquito dunks will be available at the Westchester County Airport, 2 Loop Road, West Harrison, 10604 as follows:

- Friday, May 17, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, May 18, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Ornamental ponds that lack fish offer mosquitoes an ideal breeding spot. Fathead minnows eat mosquito larvae and pupae, which stops them from maturing into biting adults. Dunks also stop mosquito development in birdbaths, rain barrels and unused pools.

Residents who plan to pick up minnows should bring a bucket or pail to hold the watertight plastic bag of minnows the County will provide. To keep them viable, residents should bring them straight home and release them immediately into ponds with at least eight inches of water.

Sherlita Amler, MD, Commissioner of Health, said: “Don’t be a mosquito’s next meal. If you have a pond, add some fathead minnows. You can also prevent mosquitoes from breeding in your yard by keeping your gutters clear and removing buckets, pails and toys that collect standing water. After it rains tip the water out of flower pot saucers, and check your yard for standing water.”

Large areas of standing water on public property that cannot easily be removed should be reported to the Health Department at (914) 813-5000.

For more information, download the “Westchester Cares Bug Off” brochure on the West Nile Virus page at <http://health.westchestergov.com>.

### **About Westchester County**

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just under a million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting [www.westchestergov.com](http://www.westchestergov.com)

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