



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Sen. Ritchie to Host No-Cost EEE Horse Vaccine Clinics This Week

PATTY RITCHIE June 25, 2012

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, HEALTH, LIVESTOCK**

| COMMITTEE: **AGRICULTURE**



### **Vaccine 90 Percent Effective Against Always-Fatal Disease in Horses**

State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced she's sponsoring two, no-cost EEE vaccine clinics for horses this week.

**\*\*\* [PRE-REGISTER FOR NO-COST EEE CLINICS BY CLICKING HERE](#) \*\*\***

The clinics are aimed at raising public awareness and preventing the spread of *Eastern Equine Encephalitis*, the mosquito-borne disease that killed at least 12 horses in Central and Northern New York last summer, and also claimed the life of a 4-year-old Oswego County girl.

The clinics—to be held Thursday evening, in Heuvelton, and Friday evening, in New Haven—are funded by a special grant Senator Ritchie obtained through the state budget, and in cooperation with local veterinarians.

“EEE is a very serious disease that is nearly always fatal in horses—and nearly 100 percent preventable, if horses are vaccinated,” said Senator Ritchie, who has been leading efforts to educate farmers and the public and attack the disease in the wake of the death of Maggie Sue Wilcox of New Haven.

“Yet many horse owners, farmers and others are still unaware of the danger both to their families and to their farm animals. These clinics aim to educate farmers and horse owners, and protect a very valuable investment.”

“Everyone needs to take steps to protect themselves from EEE, including horse owners,” said Assemblyman Will Barclay, who is co-hosting the New Haven clinic. “We’ve got to do all we can to prevent EEE, and vaccinating our horses is an important step.”

There is no human vaccine for EEE, but the horse vaccine is nearly 100 percent effective.

Senator Ritchie included funding in the state budget this year for low-cost vaccinations for horses. In addition to the no-cost clinics hosted by Senator Ritchie, horse owners can also obtain a \$15 discount on EEE vaccinations directly through their veterinarians.

The clinics are being conducted by two licensed veterinarians—Dr. Jack Zeh in Heuvelton, and Dr. Reid J. Oliver in New Haven—who have agreed to waive any additional fees for their services.

“I’m pleased that the New York State Senate is partnering with private veterinarians and community leaders to protect the health of our equine population,” said State Agriculture Commissioner Darrel Aubertine, whose department is administering the vaccination discount grant.

“The vaccines that are currently available to protect horses against Eastern Equine Encephalitis are practically 100% effective when properly administered. This is the kind of public, private and community partnership that makes real progress,” Commissioner Aubertine said.

In addition to last year’s horse deaths, EEE has also caused the deaths of five people in Oswego and Onondaga Counties over the past 40 years, including Maggie Sue last summer.

Senator Ritchie has been working with Oswego County and state officials to improve the public response to EEE, in order to prevent any additional deaths.

Additional budget funding secured by Senator Ritchie will help counties and private landowners pay for mosquito control, and she’s worked with health and other officials to better coordinate eradication efforts across the region, and improve communication with the public.

Last week, Senator Ritchie won Senate passage of a bill she’s sponsored to marshal the efforts of state health officials to push for a human vaccine for the disease.

Senator Ritchie thanked veterinarians Jack Zeh, of Heuvelton, and Reid Oliver, of Oswego and Pulaski, for their efforts to organize and conduct this week’s EEE clinics, as well as Commissioner Aubertine and state Veterinarian Dr. David Smith for their cooperation and assistance.

#### **Locations for EEE Horse Vaccine Clinics**

**Thursday, June 28**

**6 to 8 PM**

Herschberger Farm  
210 Irish Settlement Road

**Friday, June 29**

**6 to 8 PM**

Town of New Haven Highway Dept.  
4279 State Route 104 (int. Co. Rte 6)

**\*\*\* PRE-REGISTER FOR NO-COST EEE CLINIC BY CLICKING HERE \*\*\***

Senator Ritchie also offered these tips from the state Health Department to protect yourself from EEE:

Minimize your contact with mosquitoes by staying away from areas where they are most active, especially at dawn and dusk. Empty and clean stock tanks and water troughs weekly. Remove buckets and containers where water collects, and can serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

[Click here for more information to protect yourself and your loved ones from EEE.](#)