

Wednesday, Aug. 28, 2024

# Mayor's Newton Update



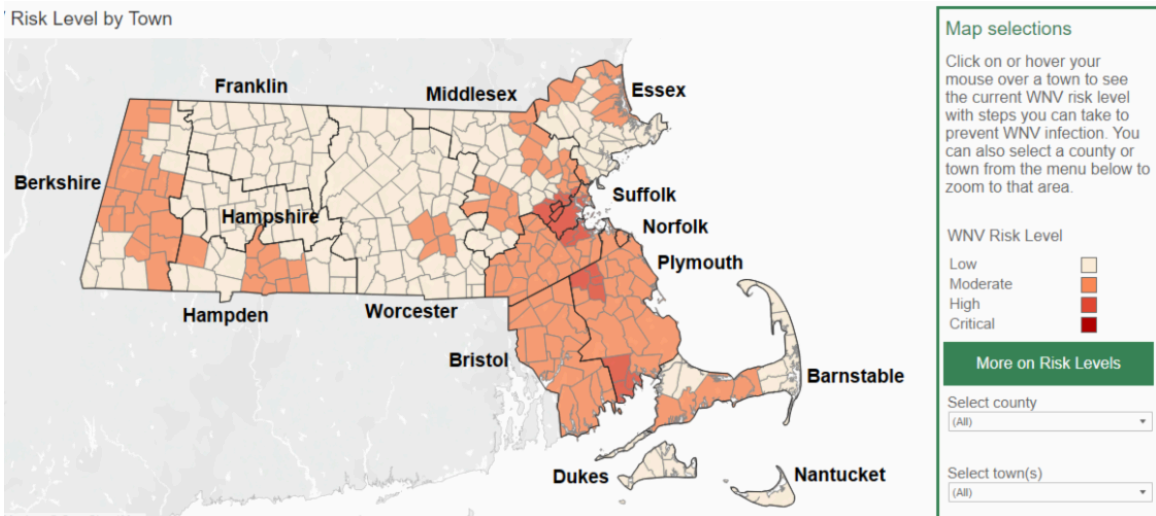
## Protection from Mosquito Bites

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) today raised the risk level for West Nile Virus (a mosquito-borne disease) in Newton to *high*.

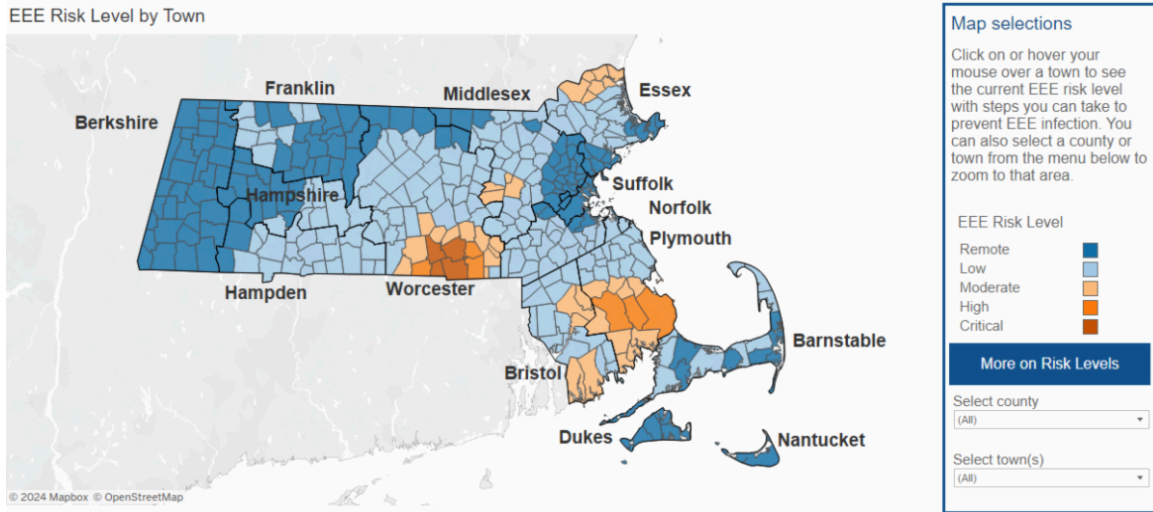
The announcement comes after two additional human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV), (one individual was exposed in Suffolk County and another in Norfolk County) were reported bringing the total number of human cases to four in Massachusetts. (Newton is in Middlesex County, right next to both Suffolk and Norfolk Counties.)

The risk level for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), another mosquito-borne disease, in Newton remains *remote*.

## Massachusetts West Nile Virus Risk Map Updated Aug. 28



## Massachusetts Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Risk Map Updated Aug. 28



Protect yourself from mosquito bites and the illnesses they can cause by:

- Using an [EPA-registered insect repellent when outdoors](#)
- Wearing long-sleeves, pants and socks
- Avoiding being outside from dusk to dawn, peak times when mosquitoes are most active
- Repairing damaged window and door screens
- Removing standing water outside since mosquitoes can breed in even small amounts of water.



Find more information about mosquito-borne diseases from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health [here](#).

*Refurbished Marty Sender Trail Reopens*



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### Riverside Pivots (Again)

We have had two significant projects approved by the City Council in the last five years – Northland and Riverside.

The developers of both have pivoted in the last few weeks as the economy in Massachusetts has changed.

Last week, the MBTA Board of Directors gave the go-ahead to Mark Development to pursue a new special permit with the Newton City Council to build approximately 545 housing units at the Riverside T Station (at the intersection of Grove Street, I-95 and the Mass Pike in Auburndale) during the first phase of construction. This modifies the previously approved plan that had included a lab/office component as well ground-level retail. (The previous plan called for 550 housing units.)

As the State is the owner of the Riverside Station and its vast parking lot, the MBTA Board needed to first give its approval before Mark Development could seek a revised Special Permit from Newton's City Council.

According to Mark Development, their new proposed first phase of development would include 545 units of housing with 20 to 25 percent of them being affordable. A *potential* second phase in the future could include an office/lab building and another 100 units of housing.

The presentation to the MBTA Board indicated they changed the project due to a combination of rising interest rates, increased construction costs, and a slowdown / over capacity in the office and lab market. (Click [here](#) to see the presentation before the MBTA.)

In the previously approved plan for Riverside, I had supported the project in no small part because of the inclusion of the commercial component of the project. We need housing and we also need office buildings or labs. The commercial component attracts jobs, increases customers for our businesses, and improves our tax base.

With the currently dim outlook for office space/labs, I'm supportive of a well-conceived Riverside project which includes diverse market rate and affordable housing, and preserves the opportunity for a future commercial component at this well situated location with an MBTA station and access to two key highways.

Click [here](#) for the update on the Northland project I provided in the last Mayor's Update a couple of weeks ago.)

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## More Electric Vehicle Chargers

Over the last 8 years, the City has installed 22 "Level 2" electric vehicle (EV) chargers. You can find them in 5 City parking lots and 6 other locations, including City Hall, the Newton Free Library, and both our high schools. These chargers are all available to the public for charging EVs.



*(Photo: With Co-Director of Sustainability Bill Ferguson at an EV Charger at Newton South High School.)*

Some definitions may be helpful .... Level 1 chargers are often referred to as "slow chargers," and are particularly useful for charging vehicles overnight. Level 3 chargers are "fast chargers," and can provide a vehicle with 80% of its charge in 20 minutes. Level 2 chargers can provide a vehicle with most of its charge in 4 to 8 hours; Level 2 chargers are the ones the City has been installing.

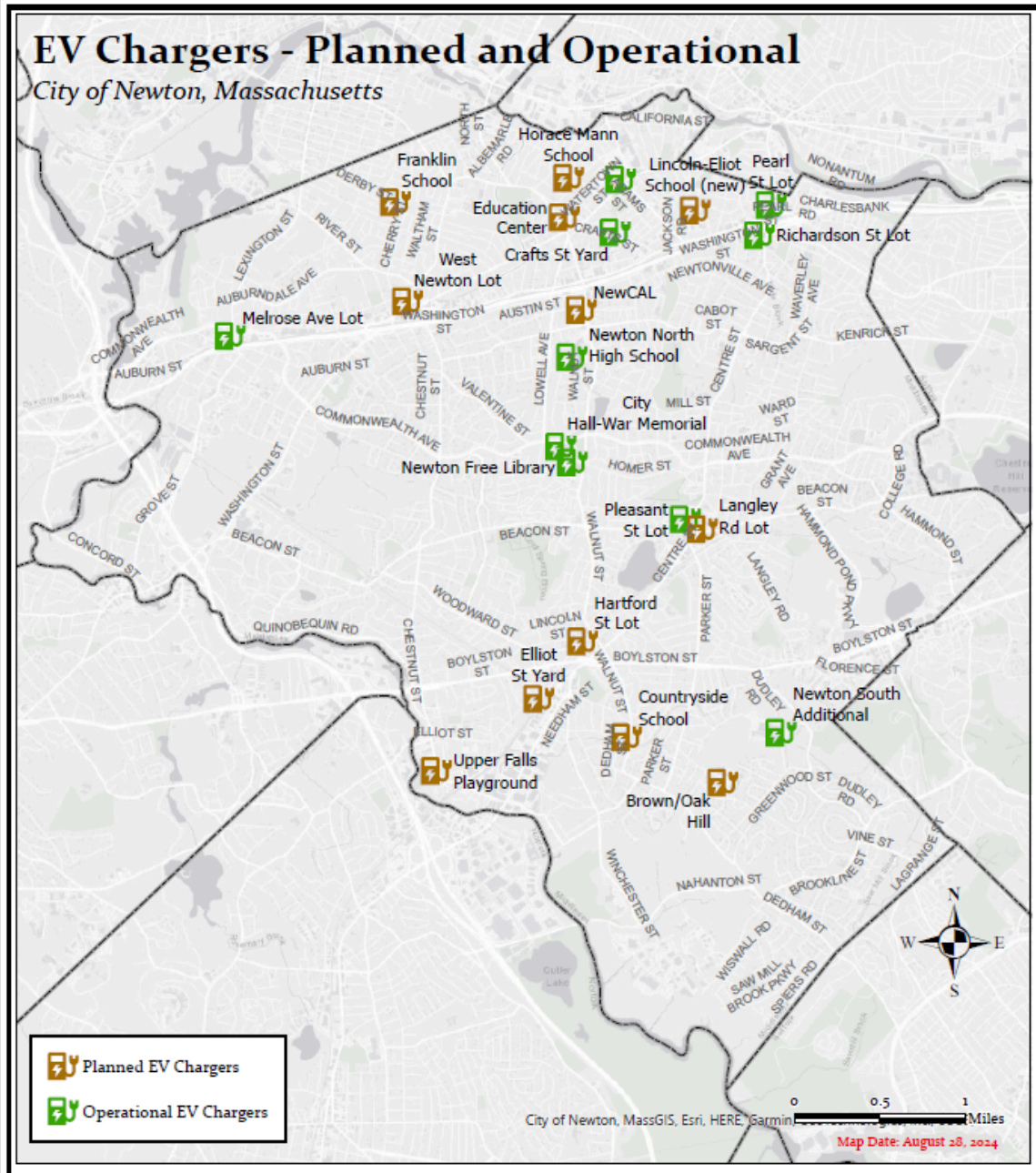
We recently received a grant from the federal Department of Energy (DOE) that let's us install approximately 15 additional Level 2 chargers for public use. With the input of our Citizens' EV Task Force, we are dispersing these additional chargers around Newton:

- Langley Road parking lot in Newton Centre
- West Newton parking lot
- Hartford Street parking lot in Newton Highlands

- Braceland Playground parking lot in Upper Falls
- Brown/Oak Hill Middle School lot as part of the upcoming solar canopy project
- Newton Education Center parking lot as part of the upcoming solar canopy project

The City will be adding even more EV chargers as part of major building projects over the next several years. We'll include them at the Cooper Center for Active Living (opening next year in Newtonville), Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School (opening next year), Horace Mann Elementary School (addition/renovation opening in 2026), Countryside Elementary School (new school opening in 2027) and Franklin Elementary School (new school opening in 2027/2028).

See the map below to see locations of the existing and planned City EV chargers. (Click on the map to see a larger version.) You can also use websites, such as [this](#) one, that show both the City and other EV chargers accessible to the public.



### Gathering on 9/11

Join us on Wednesday, Sept. 11 as we gather together to commemorate the lives lost on a day of terror we will never forget.

We will gather at 6:00 p.m. at our annual 9-11 Commemoration on the front lawn of the Newton Centre Fire Department Headquarters, 1164 Centre Street, to remember those lost in New York City, Washington, D.C. and Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

We will also gather as one community of neighbors to thank the heroes of that day – the firefighters, police officers, emergency medical personnel and the ordinary people – who on Sept. 11, 2001 ran selflessly toward the crumbling towers to save lives while risking their own.



## Voting

Polls are open at City Hall (1000 Commonwealth Avenue) for early, in-person voting in the State Primary Election from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. through the day after tomorrow, Friday, Aug. 30.

Mail in ballots must be received by the City Clerk’s Office by 8:00 p.m. on election day, Tuesday, Sept. 3, when polls close and the votes are counted. If you haven’t already mailed your ballot, it’s probably too late as the U.S. Postal Service can be slow. Instead, you can drop off your ballot in the secure ballot box located outside the main entrance to City Hall.



Polls will be open on election day (Tuesday, Sept. 3) across Newton from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Find your polling location [here](#).)

Click [here](#) for more election information, including sample ballots.

I’ll send out a Mayor’s Update on Tuesday night with election results as soon as the results are in. (That night, the results are still considered “unofficial” as a number of steps occur in the following days before the vote is certified.)

## Disposing ... Recycling ... Swapping

We all know our trash and recycling collection day and may remember that large, bulky items can be picked up for a fee at our curb.

Do you also know that Newton's Resource Recovery Center at 115 Rumford Avenue in Auburndale (by our border with Waltham) is also open for all Newton residents?

Newton's Resource Recovery Center accepts a myriad of items (over 25 different materials), most without any additional fee. You can drop off:

- Appliances and freon-containing items (e.g., air conditioners, dishwashers, dehumidifiers, stoves, refrigerators, washers and dryers, water heaters)
- Antifreeze and motor oil
- Batteries
- Cardboard – our compactor means no breaking down boxes!
- Electronics (e.g., TVs, monitors, computers, cellphones, cable cords, laptops, printers, video game consoles) (\$25 fee for TVs/monitors)
- Fluorescent bulbs
- Food waste
- Lawn mowers and snowblowers
- Mattresses and box springs (\$35 fee per piece)
- Medical sharps
- Mercury-containing devices (e.g., thermometers, thermostats, and barometers)
- Propane tanks (both the 1-pound and 20-pound tanks) and fire extinguishers
- Bulky rigid plastics (e.g., outdoor play equipment, coolers, car seats with belts and buckles removed, storage bins)
- Single stream recycling (overflow from the green cart)
- Scrap metal (items that are more than 50% metal by weight) (e.g., BBQ grills, exercise equipment, microwaves, patio umbrellas)
- Vegetable oil

Click [here](#) for a full list of materials accepted.

Also, twice a month from April through December, we offer [household hazardous waste collection events](#) by appointment that accept household chemicals, flammable paint, and pesticides. Call City Hall at 617-796-1000 during business hours to make an appointment.

Thanks to an amazing team of volunteers, we also have a way to “reuse.” Do you have any clean, useable items around your home you're looking to pass along? Or, would you like to pick some up? The “**Swap Shop**” is open Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through Oct. 26 for residents to drop off or take items.

In addition, you can drop off or pick up a **book** in good condition from the Book Shed, or donate books by dropping them in the [More than Words](#) bin.

Especially since **clothing and textiles** are no longer accepted as trash in Massachusetts, you can drop them at the Resource Recovery Center or in one of the 10 Helpsy bins located around the City. (Click [here](#) for a full list of Helpsy locations.)



Click [here](#) to find the hours of the Resource Recovery Center.

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## A New School Year Begins

This is a special time of year when our classroom doors reopen after the summer break. On Tuesday, Sept. 3 after Labor Day, give yourself extra time and pay extra attention as walkers, cyclists, school buses as well as parents and guardians driving students to school will be out in the mornings and afternoons.

As the mother of three and grandmother to four, the first day of school always feels like a new beginning and a time of promise.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

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P.S. Interested in taking an inside look at how our police department works? The Newton Police Department is starting a **Community Police Academy**. The Academy begins on Wednesday, Sept. 25 and runs for 8 weeks on Wednesday evenings through Nov. 13 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Newton Police Headquarters, 1321 Washington Street in West Newton. If you are a Newton resident or Newton business owner that is 21 years or older, email Newton Police Community Outreach Officer Justin Lau at [jlau@newtonma.gov](mailto:jlau@newtonma.gov) for more information and a digital version of the application. (Applications will be accepted through Monday, Sept. 9.)

P.P.S. Acting Police Chief George McMains invite Newtonians to take a moment and complete a short **survey about the Newton Police Department**. Your input will help us improve Police services and outreach. Click [here](#) to take the survey.

P.P.P.S. The **50+ Job Seekers Group** is back. This group meets the first and third Wednesdays of every month from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Zoom. The group begins and ends with informal networking, and each meeting is about a different topic. Join any or all sessions. The next meeting's topic, on Wednesday, Sept. 4, is LinkedIn. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.



P.P.P.P.S. Some exciting retail news in Newton Centre: An **Asian supermarket** has leased the vacant storefront formerly occupied by Walgreens at 22 Langley Road in Newton Centre (near Johnny's). The grand opening is still a ways away, but we look forward to welcoming a grocery store.

P.P.P.P.P.S. **Newton Community Education (NCE)** offers a wide range of classes for kids and adults. Looking to pursue a passion, connect with neighbors, pick up a new hobby? NCE has you covered. This fall, kids programs



include [Lego Engineering](#), [Breakdancing](#), and [Animation](#). For adults, explore day and evening classes such as [Landscape Painting](#), [Business Growth & Success](#), and [Total Body Fitness](#), or take a trip to the [Lowell Art Studios](#) or [Newport Mansions](#). NCE is part of Newton Public Schools and offers scholarships so everyone can participate. Learn more and register at [NCE's website](#) or call (617) 559-6999.

**P.P.P.P.P.S. Congratulations to Newton's 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Division 1 and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Division 2 Youth Soccer teams** which each won the Massachusetts Tournament of Champions this summer. Bravo to all the talented players, the parents and dedicated volunteers, and to the Head Coaches of both teams, Costas Pavlides and Chal Congdon.

*(Photos: Top photo is the 6th grade champs, and below is the 8th grade champs.)*





**Past P.S.s Happening Soon:**

P.S. Newton Community Pride is bringing music to our village centers on three consecutive September Sundays. The fall concert series begins with [Trilogy](#) on Sept. 8 at the Trio Courtyard in Newtonville from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Click [here](#) for more information.



Mayor Ruthanne Fuller | 1000 Commonwealth Avenue | Newton, MA 02459 US

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