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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

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First Mosquitoes Test Positive for West Nile Virus in Illinois – Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Urges Residents to Take Simple Precautions

Champaign, IL – Illinois State Public Health, announced that mosquito samples collected in DuPage County have been confirmed as the first positive test results in Illinois this year for West Nile Virus. A positive mosquito sample was collected from the communities of Naperville, Lisle and Woodridge. There has not been any reported positive mosquito samples in Champaign County.

“The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District is very diligent in sampling local mosquitoes and birds. CUPHD realizes that West Nile Virus is a concern for our community, but would like to stress that the disease is not as prevalent nor as serious as many people think.” said Garry Bird, Director of Environmental Health at the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District. “It is estimated that only 20% of those infected will develop West Nile Fever, and of those only 1 in 150 will develop a more severe form of the disease.”

Last year 77 of the state’s 102 counties were found to have a West Nile positive bird, mosquito, horse or human case. A total of 215 human cases of West Nile disease, including 10 deaths were reported last year.

West Nile Virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Most people with the virus have no clinical symptoms of the illness, but some may become ill three to 14 days after the bite of an infected

mosquito. Only about two out of 10 who are bitten by an infected mosquito will experience any illness. Symptoms of West Nile are usually mild and include fever, headache, body aches, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body and swollen lymph glands. Serious illness, such as encephalitis, meningitis, and death are possible in extreme cases. Persons older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe disease.

The best way to prevent West Nile disease or any other mosquito-borne illness is to reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and to take personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites. Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn. Use prevention methods whenever mosquitoes are present.

- When outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and apply insect repellent that includes DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles. In communities where there are organized mosquito control programs, contact your municipal government to report areas of stagnant water in roadside ditches, flooded yards and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes.

Public health officials believe that a hot summer could increase mosquito activity and the risk of disease from West Nile virus.

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