



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Increased West Nile Viral Activity in Champaign County

*Champaign-Urbana Public Health District/Champaign County Public
Health Department Urges Residents to take precautions*

Champaign, IL – Several mosquito samples in Champaign and Urbana have recently tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). “During hot and dry conditions WNV will amplify between the bird and *Culex* mosquito populations, and unfortunately with the weather we have been experiencing, this is taking place earlier than the previous couple of years,” said Jim Roberts, Director of Environmental Health at the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD)/Champaign County Public Health Department.

The best way to prevent WNV infection or any other mosquito-borne illness is to prevent mosquito bites and to eliminate mosquito breeding sites.

Prevent mosquito bites.

- Try to avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, at dawn, dusk, and in the early evening.
- When weather permits, wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Apply insect repellent that contains active ingredients which have been registered with the EPA. 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 mosquito breeding sites.

- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding.

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Empty water from bird baths, flowerpots, wading pools, pet dishes, and swimming pool covers at least once or twice a week. Maintain gutters and swimming pools. Remove old tires and other items that could collect water. Contact CUPHD at (217) 373-7900 to report areas of stagnant water.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Only about two people in 10 who are infected with WNV will experience any illness. Illness from WNV is usually mild and includes fever, headache and body aches, but serious illness such as encephalitis, meningitis and death are possible. Persons older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe disease.

As of July 17, 2012, there have been 24 counties in Illinois reporting either a positive West Nile virus bird or mosquito sample. No human cases have been reported.

Additional information about WNV can be found on the CUPHD website at <http://www.c-uphd.org/west-nile-virus.html>.

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