



Public Health
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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

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First Mosquitoes to Test Positive for West Nile Virus in Champaign County

*Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Urges Residents to Continue
to Take Precautions*

Champaign, IL – A mosquito sample collected last week in the City of Urbana has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). “As West Nile virus activity increases during the summer months, it is important for people to take precautions when outdoors and to eliminate sources of standing water around their property,” said Jeff Blackford, Program Coordinator at the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD).

The best way to prevent WNV infection 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. Precautions include:

- 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 all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding. Empty water from bird baths, flowerpots, wading pools, pet dishes and swimming pool covers at least once or twice a week. 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 August 9, 2011, there have been 10 counties in Illinois reporting either a positive West Nile virus bird or mosquito pool. 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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