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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

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

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Urges Residents to Use Insect Repellent When Outdoors in the Evening

Champaign, IL – In recent weeks, mosquito samples and dead bird samples have continued to detect the presence of West Nile virus (WNV) in Champaign County. A total of 14 WNV positive mosquito samples have been detected in Champaign and Urbana, while WNV positive dead bird samples have been detected from Tolono, west Champaign County, and the City of Champaign.

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has confirmed the first human West Nile virus case reported in Illinois for 2010. According to IDPH, it was reported that a DuPage County woman in her 50s began with the onset of illness in early August. In 2009, Illinois reported five human cases of West Nile virus with the first case reported on August 31.

In Illinois during hotter summers, such as 2002, 2005, 2006, and 2007, more human cases were reported. This year, a very hot July and August with little rain has produced very good conditions for the *Culex* mosquito and for WNV transmission. Late summer is the time of the year that you are most likely to come in contact with a WNV infected mosquito. As of August 31, 2010, there have been 25 counties in Illinois reporting either a positive West Nile virus bird or mosquito batch.

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“Continued hot weather in September could produce an increased risk of WNV cases. Residents should continue to protect themselves from mosquito bites including, at a minimum, the use insect repellent when outdoors in the evening,” said Jim Roberts, Director of Environmental Health at the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD).

CUPHD urges residents to continue to take personal actions to avoid mosquito bites when outdoors:

- Avoid times when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn.
- Apply insect repellent that includes DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants. Continue to use until evening temperatures are consistently below 50° F when mosquito flying is reduced.
- Wear shoes and socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.

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 virus include fever, headache, body aches, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body, and swollen lymph glands. Convalescence from West Nile virus fever may take one to three weeks. About one in 150 people infected will develop serious illness; encephalitis, meningitis, and death are possible in these serious cases. Persons older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe disease.

For more information about Mosquito Surveillance and West Nile virus programs, call (217) 373-7900 or visit the web at www.c-uphd.org.

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