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### **Kane records its first West Nile case of 2011**

Kane County is reporting its first human case of West Nile virus, a 63-year-old woman from St. Charles. Across the state, the Illinois Department of Public Health is reporting West Nile activity in people in nine other counties.

The woman reported feeling ill in the middle of September, but she did not require hospitalization. Last year Kane County had five reported cases, in 2009 there were none, three in 2008 and 13 in 2007. Typically, about two people in 10 who are bitten by an infected mosquito will experience any illness. Illness from West Nile is usually mild and includes fever, headache and body aches, but serious illness, such as encephalitis and meningitis, and death are possible. Most people with the virus have no clinical symptoms of illness, but some may become ill three to 15 days after the bite of an infected mosquito

People older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe disease, but healthy, active older adults who spend time working and exercising outdoors have been affected by severe West Nile virus infection. This doesn't mean you have to stay inside—it does mean that it's important to use repellent when you go outside.

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. Precautions include:

- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn. Use prevention methods whenever mosquitoes are present.

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- 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.
- Change water in birdbaths weekly. Properly maintain wading pools and stock ornamental ponds with fish. Cover rain barrels with 16-mesh wire screen. 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.

Additional information about West Nile virus can be found on the Kane County Health Department's Web site at [www.kanehealth.com](http://www.kanehealth.com) or the Illinois Department of Public Health's Web site at [www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm). People also can call the IDPH West Nile Virus Hotline at (866) 369-9710 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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