



KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2007

Contact: Tom Schlueter (630) 444-3098

(630) 417-9729 cell

Two more cases of West Nile virus found in Kane

The Kane County Health Department today announced that two more human cases of West Nile virus have been found, a 54-year-old woman from Elgin and a 31-year-old male from St. Charles. This brings the total number of human cases in Kane County this year to five. The other cases include a 41-year-old woman from Hampshire, a 29-year-old male from Geneva and a 46-year-old Elburn woman.

Also, a mosquito pool taken in Batavia tested positive for West Nile virus, bringing the total number of positive mosquito pools taken in the county to nine. Positive pools have been found in Geneva (4), Batavia (3), South Elgin and Hampshire.

Heavy rains in August offered excellent breeding grounds for the Culex species, the mosquito which is the most common mosquito to carry West Nile virus. "It is not surprising that we are seeing more cases of West Nile virus at this time of season," Health Department Executive Director Paul Kuehnert said. "It is extremely important that residents take care to remove any standing, stagnant pools of water in their yards to prevent the spread of the disease."

In 2006 Kane County reported 4 human cases. In 2002, Kane had nine human cases, none in 2003, two in 2004 and 17 in 2005.

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 illness, but some may become ill three to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.

Only about two persons out of 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

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aches, but serious illness, such as encephalitis and meningitis, and death are possible. 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. Precautions include:

- 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 flowerpots, clogged roof gutters, old tires and any other receptacles. Change water in bird baths 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 or the Illinois Department of Public Health's Web site at 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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