



## KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDIA ADVISORY

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### *Kane County Health Department Encourages Public to Take Care to Prevent West Nile Virus 4 Additional Mosquito Pools Test Positive*

The Kane County Health Department has identified four new mosquito pools that have tested positive for West Nile virus. One pool was located on the west side of Batavia, a second in South Elgin, and the third and fourth were identified on the East and West sides of Aurora, respectively. The Health Department is working with the local units of government in response to these results to increase mosquito control measures in those areas. These tests bring the number of positive pools in Kane County to ten this year. The batches that have tested positive were recovered from Aurora (3), Batavia (2), Elgin (1), Geneva (1), South Elgin (1) and West Dundee (2). To date, Kane County has no birds or humans that have tested positive for West Nile Virus this year.

31 of the 102 counties in Illinois have reported West Nile virus in mosquitoes or birds this year, but no infected humans have been identified.

“The recent hot weather we have experienced are ideal for the Culex mosquito that carries West Nile virus.” Fred Carlson, Director of Environmental Health states, “More mosquitoes mean a higher risk of exposure for people, it is important that people take steps to reduce the number of mosquitoes around their home and take personal precautions to avoid mosquito bites.”

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.

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Only about two persons out of 10 who are bitten by an infected mosquito will experience any illness. Last year 17 people in Kane County were identified as victims of West Nile virus infection. Illness from West Nile disease is usually mild and includes fever, headache and body aches, but serious illness, such as encephalitis and meningitis, and death are possible. While the disease can affect persons of all ages those older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe illness.

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.
- 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.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding, for example:
  - Discard old tires, buckets, drums or any water holding containers. Poke holes in tires used as bumpers on docks
  - Keep roof gutters and downspouts clear of debris
  - Keep trash containers covered
  - Empty plastic wading pools at least once a week and store indoors when not in use
  - Drain unused swimming pools
  - Fill in tree rot holes and hollow stumps that hold water
  - Change the water in bird baths and plant urns at least once a week
  - Store boats upside down or drain rainwater weekly
  - 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 Illinois Department of Health's website at [www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm) and the Kane County Health Department's website at [www.kanehealth.com](http://www.kanehealth.com).

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