



## KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDIA ADVISORY

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### *Kane County Health Department Identifies First Pools of Mosquitoes Positive for West Nile Virus*

Fred Carlson, Director of Environmental Health for the Kane County Health Department, today announced the identification of two mosquito batches which have tested positive for West Nile virus. The locations of the trapped mosquito pools were West Dundee and Elgin. The Health Department is working with both locales in response to this finding to increase mosquito control measures in the area. These are the first positive pools in Kane County this year. To date, no birds have tested positive for West Nile Virus in Kane County this year.

“It is that time of the year; the confirmation that mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus are present in our county emphasizes the fact that people should take precautions to reduce their risk of exposure, regardless of where they live.” Carlson stated. “While no human cases of West Nile Virus disease have been reported in Illinois, the public needs to remain vigilant.”

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. 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. 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 water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles. 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).