

Kane County Health Department, Kane County, Illinois West Nile Virus Updates for 2003 Mosquito Season

UPDATE 9-26-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

To date Illinois state public health director; Dr. Eric Whitaker has reported a total of 24 West Nile Virus (WNV) disease cases so far this year in the state of Illinois. No deaths associated with WNV have been reported. This compares to last year when Illinois led the nation with a case count of 884 and 66 associated deaths.

Kane County Health Department (KCHD) has not reported any human cases in 2003. A total of 11 birds (6 crows and 5 blue jays) and three mosquito pools were identified as positive for West Nile virus in Kane County. In 2002, 9 human cases, 1 associated death, 5 birds and 11 mosquito pools were reported from Kane County.

The decrease in human case numbers for 2003 can be attributed to many factors.

Certainly the aggressive stance toward mosquito control as well as citizen compliance with the appropriate precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites has played an important role. Other contributing factors include the diminished population of the crow and blue jay bird species, which serves as a reservoir for the virus, and the possibility of individuals having immunity due to previous exposure without development of clinical symptoms of illness.

Residents should however continue to exercise precautions to avoid mosquito bites until there is a sustained, hard frost. The following precautions are suggested:

- Whenever outdoors between dusk and dawn, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose-fitting, light colored clothing is best.
- When it is necessary to be outdoors, apply insect repellent as indicated on the repellent label. The more DEET a product contains, the longer the repellent can protect against mosquito bites. However, concentrations higher than 50 percent do not increase the length of protection. For most situations, 10 percent to 25 percent DEET is adequate. Apply repellents to clothes whenever possible; apply sparingly to exposed skin if label permits. Consult a physician before using repellents on young children.
- Check residential screens, including porches and patios, for tears and other openings and repair, as necessary, to prevent mosquito entry.
- Eliminate stagnant water in birdbaths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed.

UPDATE 9-16-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT IDENTIFIES POOL OF MOSQUITOS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS

Fred Carlson, Director of Environmental Health for the Kane County Health Department, today announced the identification of a mosquito pool on the West side of Elgin that has tested positive for the presence of West Nile Virus. The Health Department is working with the City of Elgin to respond to this finding to increase mosquito control measures in the area. This is the second positive pool in Kane County. The other pool was identified in East Dundee in August by Clarke Mosquito Control. To date, six birds have tested positive for West Nile Virus in Kane County this year.

13 cases of West Nile disease have been identified in humans in Illinois this year, down from over 345 at this time last year. Increased public education and concentrated mosquito larvaciding can be credited with some of the reduction along with an acquired immunity in the community. The mosquito season will continue until there is a sustained frost, which usually occurs in late October.

“The confirmation that this pool of mosquitoes carries West Nile Virus emphasizes the fact that the virus is around and people should take precautions to reduce their risk of exposure” says Carlson, “Kane County has not identified a positive human case of West Nile Virus this year, but the public needs to remain vigilant.”

The suggested precautions include:

- Whenever outdoors between dusk and dawn, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose-fitting, light colored clothing is best.
- When it is necessary to be outdoors, apply insect repellent as indicated on the repellent label. The more DEET a product contains, the longer the repellent can protect against mosquito bites. However, concentrations higher than 50 percent do not increase the length of protection. For most situations, 10 percent to 25 percent DEET is adequate. Apply repellents to clothes whenever possible; apply sparingly to exposed skin if label permits. Consult a physician before using repellents on young children.
- Check residential screens, including porches and patios, for tears and other openings and repair, as necessary, to prevent mosquito entry.
- Eliminate stagnant water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed.

“The public should use common sense and remain vigilant,” says Cindy Gross, Epidemiologist for the Health Department, “Only about 1 in 150 people will develop serious illness if bitten by an infected mosquito, but taking simple precautions to avoid being bitten in the first place is the most prudent action.”

UPDATE 9-12-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

Kane County Health Department has recently submitted several birds to Illinois Department of Public Health Laboratory for West Nile Virus (WNV) testing. Reports confirming detection of WNV in four birds (two blue jays and two crows) have been received. The location of these birds is as follows: a blue jay and a crow in Aurora, a blue jay in St. Charles and a crow in Elburn. In response, the Health Department will be relocating mosquito traps to increase surveillance for infected mosquitoes in these geographical locations.

Ten Illinois WNV cases have been confirmed by Illinois Department of Public Health. Six have been reported as WNV fever, a less severe form of WNV disease and four have been reported as WNV encephalitis. The most recent case reported is a resident of Dupage County.

Residents of this county should continue to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites. The mosquito season continues until there is a hard frost, which usually occurs in late October. The following precautions are recommended:

- If possible avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk.
- If necessary to be outdoors between dusk and dawn, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Additionally apply insect repellent containing DEET as indicated on the repellent label.
- Check residential screens, including porches and patios, for tears and other openings and repair, as necessary, to prevent mosquito entry.
- Eliminate stagnant water in birdbaths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and similar containers.

UPDATE 9-9-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

To date, eight Illinois West Nile Virus (WNV) cases have been confirmed by Illinois Department of Public Health. Five of the eight were identified as WNV fever, a less severe form of West Nile Disease and three were WNV encephalitis.

In Kane County, there have been no human cases identified. Throughout the season, mosquito and bird surveillance in the county has identified 2 crows and 1 mosquito pool positive for WNV.

Kane County residents are urged to continue to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites as the mosquito season continues until there is a hard frost, which usually occurs in late October.

- If possible avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk.
- If necessary to be outdoors between dusk and dawn, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Additionally apply insect repellent containing DEET as indicated on the repellent label.
- Check residential screens, including porches and patios, for tears and other openings and repair, as necessary, to prevent mosquito entry.
- Eliminate stagnant water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and similar containers.

UPDATE 8-15-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

On August 8, 2003 Clark Mosquito Control Company identified the first Kane County positive mosquito pool in East Dundee. In response, the health department has provided the Village of East Dundee larval material for breeding site control in public areas and to provide to homeowners. Additionally, Kane County Health Department has relocated two of the health department's mosquito traps to unincorporated East Dundee and to the Village of Carpentersville to increase surveillance for additional mosquito pools. To date, the 9 mosquito traps serviced by the health department have yielded 74 negative mosquito pools.

A total of 29 birds and 65 mosquito batches in Illinois have tested positive for West Nile virus since surveillance for the mosquito-transmitted virus began May 1.

Residents should continue to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites and reduce the number of mosquitoes around their home

- Stay indoors at dawn, dusk and early evening.
- When it is necessary to be outdoors, apply insect repellent as indicated on the repellent label and wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose-fitting, light colored clothing is best.
- Eliminate stagnant water in bird baths, ponds, flower pots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed
- Check for and repair any tears in residential screens, including porches and patios

UPDATE 8-11-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

An American Crow found on private property in Plato Township July 16, 2003 was reported positive for West Nile Virus on July 25, 2003. Surveillance of the immediate area surrounding the property revealed many homeowners with swimming pools and backyard ponds. In response to the identification of the bird, the Kane County Health Department has positioned one of the seven county mosquito traps on the Plato Township property. Additionally, the health department has provided larval material to the Plato Township Highway Commissioner to treat roadside ditches and to provide to homeowners.

To date, 61 mosquito pools tested by the health department have been found to be negative. The health department has also acquired servicing of two additional mosquito traps located at the Fermi Lab facility in Batavia with no positive pools identified to date.

A total of 23 birds and 36 mosquito batches in Illinois have tested positive for West Nile virus since surveillance for the mosquito-transmitted virus began May 1.

Residents should continue to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites and reduce the number of mosquitoes around their home

- Stay indoors at dawn, dusk and early evening.
- When it is necessary to be outdoors, apply insect repellent as indicated on the repellent label and wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose-fitting, light colored clothing is best.
- Eliminate stagnant water in bird baths, ponds, flower pots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed
- Check for and repair any tears in residential screens, including porches and patios

Update 7-23-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

To date all tests conducted by the Kane County Health Department on mosquito pools (19) have been negative for West Nile Virus (WNV). Mosquitoes are being collected by the Health Department at 7 different locations throughout the county. Additionally, no birds found in the county have tested positive for WNV.

Throughout the state of Illinois, 13 birds and 8 mosquito pools have tested positive. Although testing in Kane County has not identified WNV in mosquitoes or birds (crows and blue jays), residents should continue to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites and reduce the number of mosquitoes around their home

- Stay indoors at dawn, dusk and early evening.
- When it is necessary to be outdoors, apply insect repellent as indicated on the repellent label and wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Loose-fitting, light colored clothing is best.
- Eliminate stagnant water in bird baths, ponds, flower pots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles in which mosquitoes might breed
- Check for and repair any tears in residential screens, including porches and patios

Update 5-30-03 WEST NILE VIRUS

Illinois first West Nile Virus (WNV) positive bird for the year 2003 has been reported by Henderson County. Currently, no WNV positive birds have been identified in Kane County. Kane County Health Department in conjunction with Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is accepting sick or recently deceased crows and blue jays for WNV testing. Crows and blue jays reported to KCHD that are determined to be acceptable will be picked up for testing.

Additionally, beginning June 16th mosquito traps will be placed strategically throughout Kane County based on population density, vegetation and location of 2002 human cases. Five days a week mosquito batches recovered from these traps will be tested for WNV. Positive batches will be reported to IDPH and the local jurisdiction for appropriate action.

The mosquitoes currently being encountered in the environment are the most common mosquitos found in Illinois, the inland floodwater mosquito. Although a vicious biter, the floodwater mosquitoes have not been significant disease carriers in Illinois and do not carry WNV.