

PRESSRELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Date: May 17, 2010
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Mosquito Season is upon Us

The Kendall County Health Department would like to remind residents that as the temperatures increase, so does the activity of mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are not just a nuisance; they have been known to transmit diseases like West Nile Virus (WNV) and encephalitis. Hot and dry weather and stagnant water during the summer create prime breeding grounds for the Culex mosquito, the species most responsible for these diseases.

While Kendall County has not seen a positive human case of WNV since 2006, there are mosquito batches that continue to test positive. Due to cooler spring temperatures over the past couple of years, these too have been declining; testing eight positive mosquito batches in 2008 and only 4 in 2009. The lack of human cases and the decrease in positive samples may be due to increased vigilance by our residents, but the Health Department would like to emphasize that the risk is still present.

According to the Health Department's Environmental Health Unit, the best way to prevent mosquito borne illnesses is to take some of the following precautions:

- Eliminate the water sources mosquitoes use to lay their eggs. This includes water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires, and any other place water may collect. It takes about 3 days for mosquito eggs to hatch so change water in bird baths every few days. Popular garden ponds should have mosquito controls installed (top-feeding fish, circulation, larvicide).

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- 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.

As of May 13, 2010, the Illinois Department of Public Health has announced two positive WNV bird samples found in Carroll and St. Clair counties in Illinois. These positive results show that the virus is already present within the state. Even though the weather continues to fluctuate and many have yet to see a mosquito this season, it is not too early to start thinking about activities to reduce you and your family's risk. Good mosquito control begins in your own back yard. For more information on mosquito control, pesticides, or local prevention efforts, contact the Kendall County Health Department at (630) 553-9100 or go to www.kendallhealth.org.

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