

DATE: August 17, 2023
TO: DeKalb County News Media
FROM: DeKalb County Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Positive Mosquito Samples Reported by DeKalb County Health Department

The DeKalb County Health Department is reporting that mosquitoes collected in traps in DeKalb and Sandwich have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). This is in addition to Sycamore which had a positive test for WNV in July 2023.

Several counties have reported WNV positive mosquito samples this year, which is associated with an increased risk of WNV in people. There have been no human cases in DeKalb County this year.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected after feeding on an infected bird. It is important to remember that not all mosquitoes, or birds, carry West Nile virus – most do not.

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. Illness from West Nile is usually mild and includes fever, headache, and body aches, but serious illness, such as encephalitis and meningitis have been known to develop. Persons older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe disease.

“The most effective way to prevent you or your family from being infected is to reduce the chances of being bitten by mosquitoes” says Greg Maurice, Director of Health Protection. “This includes eliminating standing water from around your house and using mosquito repellent when outside.” Maurice offers these tips:

- 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. Try to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night.
- Change water in birdbaths weekly. Properly maintain wading pools and stock ornamental ponds with fish. Turn over any buckets, garbage cans, or other containers that collect water.

For additional information, check the DeKalb County Health Department website at <https://health.dekalbcounty.org/services/nuisance-complaints/> To learn more about the many programs and services of the Health Department, visit <https://health.dekalbcounty.org/> or follow us on social media.



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