

MEDIA UPDATE ON WEST NILE VIRUS

INDIANAPOLIS---State health officials are reporting that West Nile virus activity in Indiana continues to increase.

Health officials say a LaPorte County resident is the second human case of West Nile virus infection in Indiana this year. A resident of Allen County was the first human case in 2005.

Additionally, the number of birds and mosquito pools that have tested positive for West Nile virus continues to grow. A total of 20 Indiana counties have reported West Nile virus activity so far in 2005.

Health officials say that although autumn is approaching and temperatures will begin to drop a little, mosquitoes will still be active in Indiana. They continue to recommend that Hoosiers avoid being outdoors during prime mosquito biting times, from dusk to dawn, when possible. When outdoors and mosquitoes are biting, individuals should do the following:

- Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus to clothes and exposed skin; and
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants.

Health officials also recommend that individuals remove standing water from their properties to help prevent mosquitoes from breeding. The mosquitoes that carry the West Nile virus breed in stagnant water, as can be found in clogged rain gutters, ditches, catch basins, and unattended pools and bird baths.

West Nile virus is transmitted to a human by a mosquito that has first bitten an infected bird. A person who is bitten by an infected mosquito may show symptoms from three to 15 days after the bite. The virus usually causes a milder form of illness, West Nile fever, which can include fever, headache, body aches, swollen lymph glands, or a rash.

Updates on positive results for West Nile virus and a virus surveillance map are available on the West Nile virus page in the Health Information section of the Indiana State Department of Health's Web site, at www.in.gov/isdh.

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