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For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus: Positive Mosquitos Reported in SWNPHD Health District

Mosquitos in Chase County have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) according to Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department. This follows confirmed positive mosquitos found in counties surrounding the nine county health district.

“West Nile Virus is not limited to the locations which have positive tested mosquitos. People get West Nile Virus from an infected female mosquito which bites them,” states Melissa Propp, RN, Surveillance Nurse at SWNPHD. “There is no cure for WNV. The best defense against WNV is to prevent getting mosquito bites.”

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- About 1 in 5 people who are infected with WNV will develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Most people with this type of West Nile virus disease recover completely, but fatigue and weakness can last for weeks or months.
- Less than 1% of people who are infected will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues). These symptoms can include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, tremors, seizures, or paralysis.
- People with medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension and kidney disease are also at greater risk for serious illness with the West Nile Virus.

“Prevention is the best way to avoid WNV,” explains Propp “DEET in your repellent is the most effective.”

An additional protection measure is to utilize mosquito dunks in standing water that cannot be eliminated. It is a natural mosquito larvicide. It kills mosquito larvae but is harmless to birds, fish, wildlife and pets. Mosquito dunks typically last 30 days and can be purchased at retail stores.

More information on West Nile Virus may be found at our web site www.swhealth.ne.gov or call the McCook office at 308-345-4223 or Imperial office at 308-882-4269. SWNPHD – McCook is located at 404 West 10th Street – one block north of Arby’s. SWNPHD – Imperial is located at 501 Broadway.

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. You can also follow us on [Facebook.com/swnphd](https://www.facebook.com/swnphd) and [Twitter@swpublichealth](https://twitter.com/swpublichealth).

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