



September 8, 2017

For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus: Positive Mosquitos Reported in Red Willow county

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

“People get West Nile Virus from an infected female mosquito which bites them,” states Melissa Propp, RN, Surveillance Nurse at SWNPHD. “You must work on preventing mosquito bites as there is no cure for West Nile Virus. WNV is not limited to the locations which have positive tested mosquitos.”

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.

“Use your insect repellent,” states 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.

For more information on West Nile Virus, you may 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, west entrance.

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook and Twitter or view our website at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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