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For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Death in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has received confirmation of a West Nile Virus death in their health district. A total of five human cases for West Nile Virus have been reported for the SWNPHD health district which consists of Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties.

Tami Herskowitz, Surveillance Nurse at SWNPHD has been tracking results from mosquito trapping all summer with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. “We have seen very high mosquito pool numbers throughout the summer and fall,” states Herskowitz. “We continue to encourage residents to follow precautions to keep them safe from West Nile Virus until we have a hard freeze.” Basic precautions include:

- Limit time outside from dusk till dawn
- Wear long-sleeves and keep your pants on
- Repair all holes in screens
- Dump stagnant water and keep your gutters clean
- Be sure to use insect repellent with DEET and repeat every four (4) hours

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. “If you think a family member might have West Nile Virus, consult your healthcare provider for a diagnosis,” explains Herskowitz.

“Prevention is the best way to avoid WNV and DEET in your repellent is the most effective,” states Herskowitz. We have free DEET wipes at our office located in McCook at 404 West 10th Street, one block north of Arby’s.”

Mosquitos are thriving in southwest Nebraska and the continued moisture is providing numerous ideal breeding situations. Mosquitoes breed in standing water. Even a small bucket that has stagnant water in it can become home for up to 1,000 mosquitoes.

More information on West Nile Virus may be found at our website www.swhealth.ne.gov or call the McCook office at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. You can also follow us on Facebook.com/swnphd and Twitter@swpublichealth.

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