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For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Cases in Southwest Nebraska

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) in Red Willow County has another confirmed human case for West Nile Virus, totaling two for 2014. Another confirmation was also received for a positive mosquito pool for West Nile Virus. According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS), Red Willow County has a total of 12 positive mosquito pools in 2014, increasing the risk for area residents to be infected by West Nile Virus.

Tami Herskowitz, Surveillance Nurse at SWNPHD wants residents to be prepared. "I am highly encouraging residents to prevent getting mosquito bites with personal protection and making adjustments to their surroundings." Herskowitz offered the following tips to prevent mosquito bites:

- ✓ 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, however it is a limited supply."

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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