



DeWitt - Piatt

Bi-County Health Department

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PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Michael Schroeder
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department has received notice from the Illinois Department of Public Health that a dead bird sample submitted to the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The bird was collected in Monticello at the end of August.

West Nile Virus is spread to humans and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes acquire the virus by feeding on an infected host or carrier, most commonly, birds. Transmission to humans is rare and even a large number of those infected exhibit no signs or symptoms. It is recommended that you consult your doctor should you experience any rapid onset of the following: Fever, headache, body aches, joint pain, rash, fatigue, vomiting, or diarrhea. Persons with compromised immune systems are at an increased risk for more severe illness. This includes high fever, body aches, disorientation, vision loss, and in extreme cases paralysis or even death. If you are bitten by a mosquito, testing for the virus is not necessary unless symptoms develop and you seek medical care.

There are currently no human cases within the jurisdiction of the DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department.

The DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health urges all residents to protect themselves from mosquitoes especially when outdoors between dusk and dawn. Personal protection and awareness are the most important steps in prevention. According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, it is highly recommended that you practice the “3 R’s of Protecting Against Mosquitoes”:

- **Reduce** – make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut. Eliminate or refresh each week, all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires, and any other containers.
- **Repel** - when outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and apply insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR 3535 according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants.
- **Report** - report locations where you see water sitting stagnant for more than a week such as roadside ditches, flooded yards, and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes. The DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department is available to apply larvicide to any stagnant water sources following property owner approval.

The DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department will continue West Nile Virus surveillance at multiple sites within the two counties. If a resident finds a dead bird in their yard (fully intact with no signs of decomposition) they should contact the health department at (217) 762-7911.

Please contact the Division of Environmental Health at (217) 762-7911 or (217) 935-3427 with any questions or concerns.