



Press Release



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For Immediate Release
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Human Case of West Nile Virus Found in Wichita County

Wichita Falls, Texas – The Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health District has received confirmation from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) laboratory of a case of West Nile Virus (WNV) disease in a person who resides Wichita County.

This case accompanies 9 others reported throughout Texas so far this year. The individual resides in the 76308 zip code and had reportedly traveled out-of-state within the last few months.

The resident was hospitalized and has since been discharged and is recovering at home. This is the first reported case of WNV in Wichita County since 2015.

“The Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public Health Mosquito Control program is designed to mitigate West Nile Virus,” said Samantha Blair, Environmental Health Administrator. “This year, Wichita County has had 29 mosquito pools test positive for West Nile Virus and the numbers tend to rise in late summer.” She continued, “We will continue to follow our integrated mosquito management principles; citizens are urged to actively protect themselves from mosquitoes by following the four D’s anytime they go outside”

The Health District’s Environmental Health Division’s integrated pest management program includes continuing to test mosquitoes for West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne diseases, treating standing water, eliminating breeding areas and spraying for adult mosquitoes when weather conditions are favorable.

In order to spray for mosquitoes, wind speed must be between 1-10 miles per hour; and staff completes spray missions when the pollinators are not active which is normally late in the evening and early in the morning, around 3:00 or 4:00 am.

Only some mosquito species that are present in Wichita County have the capability of spreading diseases such as West Nile Virus, most are considered a nuisance.

To request spraying for mosquitoes please contact the Health District’s Vector Control unit at (940) 761-7890.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people (70-80%) who become infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected will develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Generally, people with this type of WNV disease recover completely, but fatigue and weakness can last for weeks or months.

About 1 out of 150 infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal, illness. West Nile virus (WNV) can cause an acute febrile illness or neurologic disease, including meningitis, encephalitis, and acute flaccid myelitis.

Please contact your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any of the symptoms described. It is also important to note that West Nile virus is not casually transmitted from person to person. To reduce the risk of being infected follow these precautions, also known as the “Four D’s”:

The Four D’s of Mosquito Control

1. **Dump/Drain:** Be sure to dump or drain and wipe the sides of containers (such as pet bowls, rain barrels, children’s toys, or tarps, etc.) that hold water. Mosquitoes start their life cycle in the water and many species lay their eggs above the waterline on the inside of containers, which is why it is important to wipe the sides.
2. **Deet:** If you are going outside, wear an EPA approved insect repellent. Be sure to follow the label instructions on application and reapplication. Consult your pediatrician about what age it is appropriate to use an insect repellent on young children and what type they recommend.
3. **Dress:** Wear long sleeves and long pants if you are going to be outside especially if you are doing an activity that will stir up mosquitoes resting in the grass such as yard work or outdoor sports.
4. **Dusk/Dawn and all Day:** Mosquitoes are generally considered most active at dusk and dawn so when you are able to limit your outdoor activities at those times; however, you should follow proper mosquito precautions any time you are outdoors no matter what time of day.

For questions about West Nile Virus visit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm

For more information about the Health District’s mosquito abatement program, please visit: <https://tx-wichitafalls3.civicplus.com/375/Vector-Mosquito-Control>

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