ROCK ISLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
REPORTS FIRST WEST NILE VIRUS POSITIVE MOSQUITO FOR 2015

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Rock Island County Health Department has confirmed the first West Nile virus positive mosquito batch reported in the county for 2015. Health department staff collected the mosquito batch at a trap site in Moline on June 9th.

The positive test affirms the presence of the virus in the county. With summertime weather conditions now present, both mosquito and viral activity will be increasing. The test result serves as a reminder that the public should take precautions to minimize exposure to mosquitoes that could be carrying West Nile virus as well as eliminating standing water that allows mosquitoes to breed.

In addition to mosquito traps that are operated at several locations, the Health Department also collects dead birds that are submitted for testing for the presence of West Nile virus. The public is encouraged to contact the Health Department if a person observes a sick or dying bird. Birds that have been hit by a vehicle, crashed into a building, or have been attacked by other animals are not eligible. People can report dead birds for possible collection to the Department’s Division of Environmental Health at 309-558-2840.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Common symptoms include fever, nausea, headache and muscle aches. Symptoms may last from a few days to a few weeks. However, four out of five people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms. In rare cases, severe illness including meningitis or encephalitis, or even death, can occur. People older than 50 and immunocompromised individuals are at higher risk for severe illness from West Nile virus. No human cases have been reported so far this year.
The Illinois Department of Public Health advises the public to take some simple precautions to reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and protect yourself from being bitten. Precautions include practicing the three “R’s” – reduce, repel, and report.

- **REDUCE** exposure – minimize being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn. If you go outside during these times, take precautions. Even if mosquito numbers seem low, it only takes one bite from an infected mosquito to transmit the virus.
  - Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and unscreened windows shut, especially at night.
  - Eliminate all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed, such as old tires, buckets and other receptacles, or refresh the water in bird baths, flowerpots and wading pools ever couple of days.

- **REPEL** – when outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long sleeved shirt, and apply insect repellant that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535, according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellants on infants.

- **REPORT** - report dead birds to your local health department. In communities where there are organized mosquito control programs, contact your municipal government about areas of stagnant water in roadside ditches, flooded yards, and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes.

Additional information about West Nile virus can be found by logging onto [www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/west-nile-virus](http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/west-nile-virus) or you may also go to our website [www.richd.org](http://www.richd.org) and click on the Environmental Health tab and then on the West Nile virus tab.