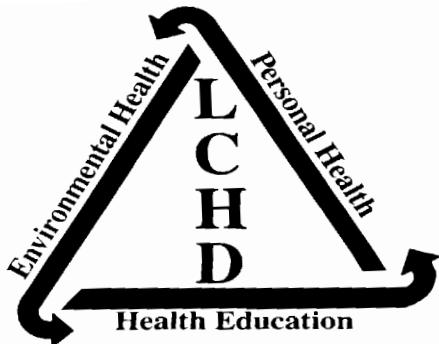


MEDIA RELEASE



Date: July 23, 2025
To: All Media
From: LaSalle County Health Department
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For Immediate Release

“Mosquitoes Test Positive for West Nile virus”

Ottawa, IL – The LaSalle County Health Department received confirmation that mosquitoes from Marseilles tested positive for West Nile virus. The mosquitoes were collected on July 22nd and Environmental Health staff conducted the confirmatory test on the mosquitoes at the Health Department. This is the first documented West Nile virus activity in LaSalle County this year. According to Jennifer Arroyo, Director of Environmental Health, “this is the time of year we expect to see West Nile virus activity increase. The rain we have experienced recently could contribute to areas of standing water and mosquito breeding. It is important to wear your insect repellent, especially during the evening hours, to help prevent illness.”

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a *Culex* mosquito, commonly called a house 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. Most people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms; however, in rare cases it can lead to severe illness including paralysis, meningitis or encephalitis (i.e. brain and nerve infections), or even death. People older than 60 and those with weakened immune systems are at highest risk for severe illness.

IDPH urges the public to *Fight the Bite* by practicing the three “R’s” – reduce, repel, and report:

- **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 light-colored, long-sleeved shirt, and apply an EPA-registered insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, IR 3535, para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone 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 local health department or city government may be able to add larvicide to the water, which will kill any mosquito larvae.

A complete listing of West Nile virus statistics for LaSalle County is available on the Health Department's web site at www.lasallecountyil.gov under Environmental Health/Vector Control. A state-wide listing is available at the Illinois Department of Public Health's web site at <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/west-nile-virus/surveillance>

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