

West Nile virus discovered in Edwardsville

July 23 2015 1:57 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - The City of Edwardsville was contacted by the Madison County Health Department regarding the discovery of the West Nile virus in Edwardsville. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) maintains a sophisticated disease surveillance system to monitor animals and insects that can potentially carry the virus: dead crows, robins, blue jays, mosquitoes and horses. Mosquitoes can either carry the virus or get it by feeding on infected birds. The surveillance system also includes infectious disease physicians, hospital laboratory directors and infection control practitioners, local health departments and staff from IDPH's laboratory, environmental health and infectious diseases divisions who test for and report suspect or confirmed cases of various diseases that can be caused by mosquitoborne viruses.

The City of Edwardsville will increase the frequency of insecticide spraying throughout the City, as well as identifying and treating areas of standing water that harbor mosquito

larvae. We can only treat publicly owned property and we rely heavily on the cooperation and efforts of property owners to perform preventative maintenance. Information about the West Nile Virus and tips on how to protect yourselves and your community can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/prevention/index.html> or <http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm>.

West Nile virus (WNV) is most commonly transmitted to humans by mosquitoes. You can reduce your risk of being infected with WNV by using insect repellent and wearing protective clothing to prevent mosquito bites. There are no medications to treat or vaccines to prevent WNV infection. Fortunately, most people infected with WNV will have no symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected will develop a fever with other symptoms. Less than 1% of infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal, neurologic illness. The most vulnerable citizens are the very young, elderly and those with compromised immune systems. Usually symptoms occur from three to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.

For specific information on West Nile Virus in our area contact the Madison County Health Department at (618) 692-8954.