

West Nile Virus Detected in Washington Township

A sample of 22 *Culex* mosquitoes, collected in the Port Colden area of Washington Township, has tested positive for West Nile Virus. The mosquitoes were collected on August 22th, in a trap specifically designed to catch *Culex* mosquitoes, which are the type responsible for transmitting West Nile virus, particularly from bird to bird. This sample of mosquitoes was sent to the state Public Health and Environmental Lab in Trenton on Monday, August 26, 2013.

Mid to late August is peak time for this virus to be transmitted to humans and other mammals. Virus testing on birds and mosquitoes has been ongoing for collections made since April of this year. So far this year, mosquitoes (totaling 230 samples) from every municipality in Warren County have been tested by the state lab, with 12 samples testing positive for West Nile virus. Those samples were collected from Blairstown, Franklin, Hackettstown, Hardwick, Knowlton, Washington Township and White.

Subsequent trapping for adult mosquitoes is taking place to survey for mosquito species more likely to bite people. Treatments to reduce adult mosquito populations in that area are on-going.

Residents are urged to help reduce their risk of contracting mosquito-borne diseases by following these guidelines:

- Don't produce mosquitoes on your property. **Dump** or **drain** standing water. Mosquitoes can't begin their life without water.
- **Defend** yourself against mosquitoes using repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.
- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are present, typically **Dawn** and **Dusk**.
- **Report neglected swimming pools** by calling 908-453-3585 or visiting www.warrencountymosquito.org *Anonymous calls accepted*. Just one neglected pool can produce more than **1 million** mosquitoes and affect people up to **five miles** away.

WEST NILE VIRUS INFORMATION

West Nile virus symptoms of the mild form include fever, headache, tiredness, body aches, and swollen lymph glands. While the illness can be as short as a few days, even healthy people have reported being sick for several weeks.

Less than one percent of individuals (about 1 in 150 people) infected with West Nile virus will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent. West Nile virus infection can be fatal.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The collection and testing of dead birds provides an indication of the presence of WNV. Residents can assist in this surveillance effort by reporting dead birds, especially crows (large, all black birds) or blue jays to the Warren County Health Department at 908-475-7960. When appropriate, they will be submitted for West Nile virus testing.