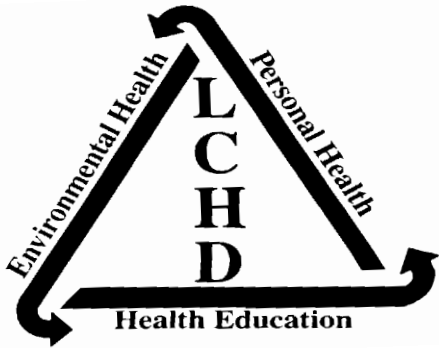


MEDIA RELEASE



Date: July 21, 2023
To: All Media
From: LaSalle County Health Department
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Ottawa, IL 61350
Contact: Leslie Dougherty (ext. 74314) or Jenny Barrie (ext. 74315)
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For Immediate Release

" Mosquitoes Test Positive for West Nile virus in Ottawa"

Ottawa, IL – The LaSalle County Health Department received confirmation that mosquitoes from Ottawa tested positive for West Nile virus. The mosquitoes were collected on July 21st and Environmental Health staff conducted the confirmatory test on the mosquitoes at the Health Department. To date, the following West Nile virus activity in mosquitoes has been documented for 2023:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Date Collected</u>	<u>Animal/Insect</u>
MARSEILLES	06/2/2023	MOSQUITOES
LASALLE	06/27/2023	MOSQUITOES (2 batches)
UTICA	07/12/2023	MOSQUITOES
OTTAWA	7/21/2023	MOSQUITOES

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of Culex mosquitoes, 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 meningitis or encephalitis, or even death. People older than 60 and individuals with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe illness from West Nile virus.

Monitoring for West Nile virus includes laboratory tests for mosquito batches, dead crows, blue jays, and robins, as well as testing humans with West Nile virus-like symptoms. People who see a sick or dying crow, blue jay, or robin should contact the health department, which will determine if the bird will be picked up for testing.

There are some simple precautions you can take to Fight the Bite. Precautions include 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, pet bowls, clogged rain gutters, 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, old tires, stagnant pools, 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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