Village of Skokie

June 11, 2019

For Immediate Release
Village of Skokie Health Department

Mosquitoes Test Positive for West Nile Virus in Skokie

The Skokie Health Department works diligently with the Northshore Mosquito Abatement District (NSMAD) each summer to monitor mosquito activity in the Village in order to lower the risk of West Nile Virus (WNV) infections.

This week, a mosquito pool in Skokie has tested positive for WNV. There have been no human WNV cases reported in Skokie for 2019, but this may change over the next few weeks and the Skokie Health Department urges residents to take precautions to prevent mosquito bites. Measures to reduce your risk of being bitten include staying indoors at dawn, dusk or early evening; wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants whenever you are outdoors; spraying clothes with repellants and wearing protective clothing if spending time in a heavily wooded area and applying insect repellents containing DEET very sparingly on exposed skin.

Remember, if an outdoor object can hold water, it can serve as a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Property owners can eliminate mosquito breeding areas in the following manner:

- Remove standing water where mosquitoes can breed. For example, standing water in plant pots, children's toys, roof gutters, downspout drainage, ornamental birdbaths and ponds.
- Clean and maintain any catch basins that may be on the property. NSMAD will treat your catch basin for mosquito larvae. For more information, please call 847/446-9434.
- Change the water in birdbaths and plant pots at least once a week.
- Empty plastic pools at the end of each day and store indoors.
- Keep grass and shrubbery cut short. Adult mosquitoes accumulate in cool, shady areas.
- Keep gutters clean and free-flowing. Eliminate dips and low areas that collect water.

Most people infected with the virus will have few or mild symptoms including fever, headache, body aches, skin rash and swollen lymph nodes. Severe infections can cause high fever, stiff neck, disorientation, muscle weakness and, rarely, death. Symptoms generally occur three to 14 days following the bite of an infected mosquito. Anyone can get WNV, however, people over age 50 or individuals with a weakened immune system have the highest risk of developing severe illness. If you suspect you have WNV you should contact your doctor.

If you find a dead bird it is important to contact the Skokie Health Department to collect the bird for testing. Historically, some birds have tested positive for WNV, and results from testing help to determine the extent of WNV activity. To report a dead bird, please call 847/933-8484.

For more information on WNV or to report potential mosquito breeding sites, please contact the Skokie Health Department at 847/933-8484 or the NSMAD at 847/446-9434. The Skokie Health Department is one of only seven state-certified municipal health departments in Illinois and provides a wide range of services to the community.

To learn more about the Skokie Health Department, please visit www.skokie.org or call 847/933-8252.

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