

**For Immediate Release**

July 25, 2014

**North Central District Health Department**

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## **West Nile Virus Update**

As of the week ending July 25, 2014 there have been 3 human cases of West Nile Virus in Nebraska. There have not been any deaths linked to West Nile Virus so far in 2014. Two of the cases have West Nile Virus fever and the other case has West Nile Virus meningoencephalitis. Mosquito pools have tested positive for West Nile Virus in 7 counties throughout Nebraska. There have not been any birds that have tested positive for West Nile Virus in Nebraska.

Most people who get West Nile Virus from an infected mosquito will have no symptoms or will have only mild flu-like symptoms. Less than one out of 150 people who get bitten by an infected mosquito become seriously ill. However, people over the age of 50 and those with weakened immune systems are especially at risk to the disease and are more likely to have serious results.

West Nile fever includes flu-like symptoms, such as fever and muscle weakness. Symptoms of West Nile encephalitis include inflammation of the brain, disorientation, convulsions and paralysis.

North Central District Health Department would like to remind you to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites. You can help lower your chances of getting West Nile Virus by following these steps:

- Put on mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus;
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants and socks;
- Avoid going out at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active; and
- Get rid of standing water to reduce mosquito breeding sites.

North Central District Health Department also takes calls regarding sick or dead birds that have been found. Certain types of birds are sent in for testing if they are in good condition and have been dead for less than 24 hours. All dead birds should also be reported to the Health Department for documentation. To report dead birds please call 1-877-336-2406.

For more information call North Central District Health Department at 1-877-336-2406 or visit the DHHS Web site at: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/wnv.aspx>. *North Central District Health Department* serves Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce, and Rock Counties.