



PRESS RELEASE

June 22, 2023

The Clinton County Health Department has confirmed the first mosquitoes in the county to test positive for West Nile virus. The Health Department collected several positive mosquito batches on June 22, 2023, from Breese, IL in Clinton County.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a *Culex pipiens* mosquito, 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. However, four out of five people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms. 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 in Illinois includes laboratory tests for mosquito batches, dead crows, blue jays, robins and other perching birds, as well as testing sick horses and humans with West Nile virus-like symptoms. People who see a sick or dying crow, blue jay, robin or other perching bird should contact the Clinton County Health Department at 618-594-8942, or check their website for details to determine if the bird will be picked up for testing.

As of June 22, 2023, 4 other counties in Illinois have reported a West Nile virus positive mosquito batch or bird. IDPH encourages the public to *Fight the Bite* by 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, 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, or IR 3535 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, 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.