

Media Release

For Immediate Release:

August 23, 2011

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MOSQUITOES FOUND POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN MEDINA COUNTY

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Zoonotic Disease Program in Columbus reported on August 22, 2011, that adult mosquitoes collected by the Medina County Health Department on August 11, 2011, from the Letha House County Park in Chatham Township tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). Test results are not immediately known as laboratory testing takes about 2 to 3 weeks.

“This is the first report of WNV in mosquitoes in Medina County since 2007,” said Donald Stewart, Medina County Health Department Environmental Division Director.

ODH also reports a sharp increase in 2011 Ohio WNV activity. To date, the number of WNV-positive mosquito pools in Ohio is at 248. At the same time last year, there were only 78 positive pools statewide, with a year-end total of 260. With increased mosquito populations from the exceptionally wet weather this spring and summer, there is a higher chance of mosquito-borne diseases such as WNV.

“Fortunately, despite the increased number of positive mosquito pools in Ohio, there have not been any human cases reported at this time,” says Stewart.

Because humans can get WNV only from the bite of an infected mosquito, ODH and the Medina County Health Department remind residents to take the following steps to protect themselves from biting mosquitoes and potential exposure to WNV:

- Eliminate standing water/mosquito-breeding sites around your home (such as cans; bottles; bird baths; swimming, wading, or decorative pools; pool covers; tarps; buckets; tires; holes in trees; clogged ditches or drainage ways; clogged rain gutters; tire ruts; and animal hoof prints).
- Keep weeds and tall grass to a minimum.
- Make sure doors and windows have screens to keep mosquitoes out. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Avoid being outside when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite – evening, nighttime, and dawn hours.

- If you must be outside during active times, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks, and use an insect repellent containing DEET.

Mosquito collections are part of the Medina County Health Department's on-going surveillance program to determine WNV activity in the county. Stewart adds, "With West Nile Virus now present in the county, the Health Department will increase its surveillance and larvaciding treatment activities in the Letha House Park and surrounding areas."

Residents can report standing water areas and obtain more information about mosquitoes and the Health Department's treatment program by contacting the Medina County Health Department Environmental Division at 330-723-9523, toll free at 888-723-9688, or by visiting its website at: www.medinahealth.org.

Mosquito Control services are completely funded by your local property tax health levy. Medina County Health Matters!

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