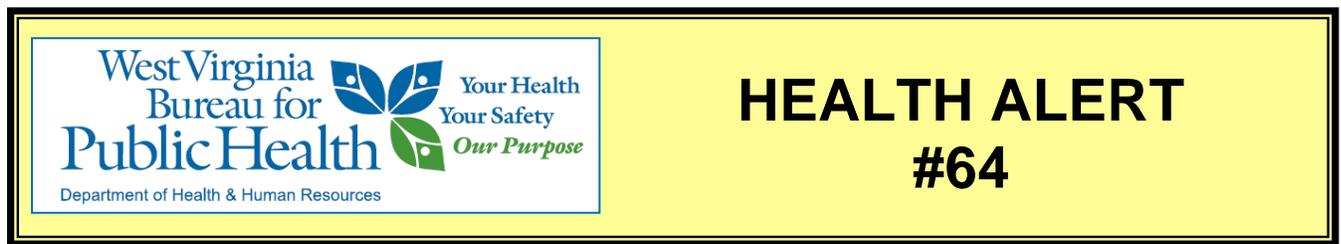


THIS IS AN OFFICIAL WEST VIRGINIA HEALTH ALERT NUMBER WV0064-12-07-17

Distributed via the WV Health Alert Network – July 17, 2012



Increased West Nile Virus Activity Among Mosquitoes

TO: Local Health Departments and All Healthcare Providers

FROM: Marian L. Swinker, MD, MPH, Commissioner for Public Health and State Health Officer, WVDHHR, Bureau for Public Health

DATE: July 17, 2012

Mosquito surveillance data from this season has recently shown an increase in WNV activity among mosquito species. Currently, 41 of 200 (20.5%) collected mosquito pools have tested positive for WNV. The majority of the positive pools were collected from June 28-July 10, 2012. In comparison, by the same time last year one of 70 (1.4%) mosquito pools was WNV-positive.

Two human cases of WNV were detected in West Virginia during 2011; however there is a concern that increased mosquito activity could be a risk for more human cases this year. This serves as a good opportunity to provide educational messages to the general public focused on mosquito bite prevention including wearing pants and/or long sleeves while outdoors, appropriately using recommended insect repellants, and emptying containers that hold water. A model press release is attached to help in delivery of these messages and a mosquito-borne illness prevention checklist can be found at:

http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/Zoonosis/Mosquito/Documents/Mosquito_bite_prevention_chklist.pdf

In addition, surveillance for human cases is important. Symptoms for persons with WNV infection can range from an acute febrile illness to encephalitis. The preferred diagnostic test for WNV and other arboviral encephalitis is virus-specific IgM antibodies in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) or serum. Testing for a complete arbovirus panel is available free-of-charge at the Bureau for Public Health's Office of Laboratory Services (OLS). Please see www.wvdhhr.org/labservices/labs/virology/arbovirus.cfm or call OLS at (304)-558-3530.

Thank you in advance for helping us in this effort!

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to Local Health Departments and other key stakeholders. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance, warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation. Unlikely to require immediate action.