

First Human Case of West Nile virus reported in Denton County

May 31, 2012-Denton County Health Department (DCHD) has investigated and confirmed the first human case of West Nile virus for 2012, found in the southern portion of unincorporated Denton County. For patient confidentiality reasons, no further personal information will be released.

West Nile virus cases have occurred in Denton County since 2002; however, in the last 2 years, no cases have been reported to Denton County officials. DCHD Chief Epidemiologist Juan Rodriguez says “this report is a little earlier than we normally see West Nile virus in Denton County”, but clarifies that “single reports of early onset of human illness do not necessarily indicate that an unusually heavy West Nile virus season is ahead of us.”

It is always a good idea for all residents to take the proper precautions to reduce their risk of getting the mosquito-borne West Nile virus by remembering the four D’s: drain, dress, DEET and dusk/dawn. Residents should:

- **Drain** standing water around their homes to reduce mosquito hatching grounds.
- **Dress** in pants and long sleeves when outside in mosquito-infested areas, but avoid becoming too hot.
- Apply an insect repellent that contains **DEET** (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) to exposed skin and to clothing when outdoors.
- Stay indoors at **dusk and dawn**, when mosquitoes are most active.

Rodriguez stresses that every mosquito bite does not cause illness. “Not every mosquito carries the virus, and less than 1 percent of the bites from mosquitoes that do have the virus actually cause serious illness,” she said. “But we have had West Nile illness in Denton County, and it’s a good idea to reduce the risk by eliminating mosquito hatching grounds and by minimizing exposure to mosquitoes.”

DCHD has partnered with Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) to develop an extensive West Nile virus task force to provide West Nile education around Denton County. Diana Corona, Executive Director of RSVP says “RSVP has volunteers that are ready and trained to present this important information”. If you are interested in the West Nile education, please contact RSVP at 940-383-1508.

More information is available on the Denton County Health Department West Nile virus website at <http://www.dentoncounty.com/heart/WNVNVMCG/index.htm>.