

Denton County Health Department
Contact: Sarah McKinney
sarah.mckinney@dentoncounty.com
(940) 349-2918, cell (940) 465-4939
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



First West Nile Virus-Associated Death Reported in Denton County

August 7, 2012 –The Denton County Health Department (DCHD) has confirmed its first West Nile virus-associated death for 2012. The patient was in his 90's, had underlying health conditions, and resided in the city of Denton. For patient confidentiality, no further information will be released.

West Nile virus is a potentially serious virus that is transmitted by mosquitoes. Less than 1% of those infected with West Nile virus will experience the serious form of the illness (West Nile Neuroinvasive Disease). Serious symptoms include high fever, severe headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, tremors or convulsions, vision loss, muscle weakness, and numbness or paralysis. Residents experiencing any of these symptoms should immediately contact their health care provider. The elderly and individuals with underlying medical conditions are known to be at an increased risk. The majority of serious WNV infections and deaths occur in persons over the age of 50.

Around 20% of those bitten by a West Nile virus-carrying mosquito may experience mild symptoms (West Nile fever), such as fever, headache, nausea, body aches, swollen lymph nodes, and skin rash. Approximately 80% of those bitten by an infected mosquito will not experience any symptoms.

Residents should take the proper precautions to reduce their risk of getting Nile virus by remembering the four D's:

- **Drain** standing water around their homes to reduce mosquito breeding grounds. Consider use of BTI briquettes (or mosquito dunks) in water that cannot be drained, such as small ponds and drinking troughs.
- Stay indoors at **Dusk** and **Dawn**, when mosquitoes are most active.
- Apply an insect repellent that contains DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) to exposed skin and to clothing when outdoors. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommends Picaridin (KBR 3023).
- **Dress** in pants and long sleeves when outside, but avoid becoming too hot.

DCHD has partnered with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) to develop a West Nile virus task force to provide education around Denton County. If you are interested in West Nile education for your organization, please contact RSVP at 940-383-1508.

Please visit the DCHD West Nile virus website (www.dentoncounty.com/heart/wnv), or call the West Nile virus hotline (940-349-2907) for more details about symptoms, prevention tips, county-wide contacts, reducing mosquitoes around your home, and disease statistics.