

For Immediate Release

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DANVILLE -- A bird collected from the Danville area has tested positive for West Nile Virus.

The Vermilion County Health Department has received calls about 10 dead birds so far this year. Two of the birds were collected and found to be suitable for testing. All birds collected are submitted to the U of I School of Veterinary Medicine laboratory for West Nile Virus testing.

A dead crow was collected on Sept. 18, 2017 from the north side of Danville. This bird was found to be positive for the West Nile virus.

The virus can be transferred to humans by the bite of the Culex mosquito if the mosquito has bitten an infected bird.

Symptoms of West Nile Virus can include a fever, body aches, joint pains, headaches, vomiting, diarrhea, or a rash, and can last up to several weeks. The Center for Disease Control says that only 1 in 5 people infected with the virus develop symptoms, and less than 1 percent of them develop severe or fatal neurological illness.

The Illinois Department of Public Health reports that, in 2016, there were total of 155 human cases of West Nile Virus in Illinois, and six disease-related deaths. That year, West Nile Virus was found in 61 counties in the state. There has been reported 1 disease-related death this year.

Taking some simple precautions can help you avoid mosquito bites, regardless of the type of mosquito or the diseases they carry. Precautions that the Illinois Department of Public Health recommends include the practice of the three "R"s – reduce, repel, report.

- **REDUCE** exposure - avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn.
  - 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, especially at night.
  - Eliminate all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles.

- REPEL - when outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and apply 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 - In communities where there are organized mosquito control programs, contact your municipal government to report areas of stagnant water in roadside ditches, flooded yards and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes.