

# NEWS

## For Immediate Release

August 7, 2020

### **West Nile Virus Positive Mosquitoes Found in Elmore County**

**Elmore County** – A single pool of West Nile Virus (WNV) positive mosquitoes was identified in Prairie, Idaho, located in Elmore County. Since the discovery, the Elmore County Mosquito Abatement District has treated the area where the positive pool was identified. This time of year 27 mosquito traps are set and samples are collected weekly for testing throughout Elmore County. This year's first positive pool of mosquitoes in Elmore County comes later than last year's, which was discovered in mid-July.

No other counties within CDH's four-county jurisdiction of Ada, Boise, Elmore, and Valley have reported positive WNV mosquito pools, however, positive pools have been identified this season in nearby Canyon and Gem Counties. At the time of this release, no human or animal WNV cases have been reported in Idaho for the season, according to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's WNV Surveillance Program.

The discovery of mosquitoes carrying WNV serves as a reminder to the public to protect themselves from mosquitoes. WNV is usually contracted from the bite of an infected mosquito; it is not spread from person-to-person through casual contact. Symptoms of infection often include fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash. In some cases, the virus can cause severe illness, especially in people older than 50, and may require hospitalization. On rare occasion, it can lead to death.

To reduce the likelihood of WNV infection, people are advised to avoid mosquitoes, particularly between dusk and dawn when they are most active. In addition, you should:

- Cover up exposed skin when outdoors and apply DEET or other EPA-approved insect repellent to exposed skin and clothing. Carefully follow instructions on the product label, especially for children.
- Insect-proof your home by repairing or replacing screens.
- Reduce standing water on your property; check and drain toys, trays or pots outdoors that may hold water and harbor mosquito eggs.
- Change birdbaths, static decorative ponds, and animal water tanks weekly because they may provide a suitable mosquito habitat.

WNV does not usually affect domestic animals, such as dogs and cats, but it can cause severe illness in horses and certain species of birds. Although there is no vaccine available for people, there are several vaccines available for horses. People are advised to vaccinate their horses.

For more information on West Nile Virus, including a tracking map by county, visit [www.westnile.idaho.gov](http://www.westnile.idaho.gov).

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