

North Shore Mosquito Abatement District

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West Nile Virus Activity Increasing in Communities Served By the NSMAD

Northfield, IL —North Shore Mosquito Abatement District (NSMAD) surveillance indicates that the risk from West Nile virus at this time, is at the highest levels since the 2012 outbreak, when 290 Illinoisans, 174 in Cook County, became ill.

The WNV infection rate in mosquitoes collected in District traps during the past week has increased significantly. According to Mark Clifton, Director of the NSMAD, “We are seeing amplified levels of West Nile virus in mosquitoes. The amount of virus we are detecting in mosquitoes is well above the historical average for this time of year and is also occurring earlier in the season than the average. These factors indicate that the risk for human West Nile virus infections is elevated and will likely remain elevated through the remainder of August. Everyone really needs to adopt personal protection behaviors.”

WNV positive batches of mosquitoes have been found in NSMAD traps located in every community served. In response to the increase in WNV activity, the NSMAD is increasing adult mosquito control operations throughout the District to augment continued larval mosquito control.

West Nile virus is transmitted to humans via the bite of an infected *Culex pipiens* mosquito. Most people infected with the virus show no symptoms. Mild cases may cause a slight fever or headache. More severe infections are marked by a rapid onset of a high fever with head and body aches, disorientation, tremors, convulsions and, in the most severe cases, paralysis or death. Symptoms typically occur within three to 14 days after the bite from an infected mosquito. Persons 50 years of age or older are at the highest risk for serious illness.

The NSMAD recommends that residents take personal protection measures to minimize mosquito bites including: using insect repellent, wearing loose fitting clothing and avoiding peak mosquito feeding times during the hours around dawn and dusk. Residents are urged to examine their property and eliminate any items that can hold water, particularly smaller items that may be easily overlooked. If it can hold water, it can breed mosquitoes.

The North Shore Mosquito Abatement District (NSMAD) is a local government agency responsible for controlling the regional mosquito population in order to reduce the risk of disease from mosquito borne illness and minimize the negative impact mosquitoes have on the quality of life in the municipalities of Deerfield (Cook County, east of Pfingsten Road) Evanston, Glencoe, Glenview (east of Pfingsten Road), Golf, Kenilworth, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove, Niles (east of Harlem Avenue), Northbrook (east of Pfingsten Road), Northfield, Skokie, Wilmette, and Winnetka. Please visit www.nsmad.com for more information.

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