



902 W. Springfield, Rd, Taylorville, IL 62568
Phone: 217-824-4113 Fax: 217-824-5407

MEDIA RELEASE

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**CHRISTIAN COUNTY MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS
MOSQUITO VECTOR REPORT**

Taylorville, IL - As of July 12, 2023 Christian County joins the 17 counties in Illinois that have been found to be West Nile virus (WNV) positive. The mosquitoes were collected on July 11th in the Mount Auburn area and Environmental Health staff conducted the confirmatory test on the mosquitoes at the Health Department. According to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), a county is considered positive for WNV when a mosquito, bird, horse, or human tests positive for the virus.

According to the weekly WNV activity report released by the IDPH, there have been no human cases of WNV in the state in the 2023 season.

Recent rains and warm temperatures create an ideal environment for mosquito populations in our area. According to Dr. Chad Anderson, Administrator of the Christian County Health Department, "it is important to eliminate any standing water, as it creates an organic rich site, perfect for mosquito breeding. Check around your home for areas of standing water like planters, wading pools, birdbaths, anything that may collect water. "

In addition to reducing mosquito breeding areas, be sure to take precautions while enjoying the outdoors, particularly in the early morning and evenings, wear long sleeved shirts and pants, use EPA registered insect repellents that contain DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD) or 2-undecanone.

Another important part of WNV detection is testing infected birds. If you find a bird that has recently died with no apparent reason, please contact your local health department. Collecting fresh, dead birds and having them tested for WNV is an important monitoring tool.

The Christian County Health Department will continue to monitor and test mosquitoes for WNV. Remember reducing mosquito breeding habitats and reporting dead birds can help reduce our chance of contracting this virus. If you have any questions regarding West Nile Virus or other disease vectors, please contact us or your local health department

Dr. Chad Anderson
Administrator
Christian County Health Department