



St. Joseph County Department of Health

"Promoting physical and mental health and facilitating the prevention of disease, injury, and disability for all St. Joseph County residents"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WEST NILE VIRUS FOUND IN ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

The St. Joseph County Department of Health has identified a pool of West Nile Virus positive mosquitoes in northern Osceola. St. Joseph County is one of 4 counties in Indiana where mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus have been found this year to date. There have not been any human cases of West Nile Virus in Indiana this year to date.

The St. Joseph County Department of Health encourages you to take the following steps to protect you and your family from mosquitoes:

- Avoid being outdoors during prime mosquito biting times - dusk to dawn - when possible.
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-methane-diol to clothes and exposed skin.
- Cover exposed skin by wearing a hat, long sleeves and long pants in places where mosquitoes are especially active, such as wooded areas.
- Make sure all windows and doors have screens, and that all screens are in good repair.
- Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors or in an unscreened structure.

To reduce potential mosquito breeding grounds:

- Discard old tires, tin cans, ceramic pots or other containers that can hold water (even a small bucket that has stagnant water in it for seven days can become home to up to 1,000 mosquitoes).
- Repair failed septic systems.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers left outdoors.
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery trimmed.
- Clean clogged roof gutters, particularly if leaves tend to plug up the drains (roof gutters are easily overlooked, but can produce millions of mosquitoes each season).
- Frequently replace the water in pet bowls.
- Flush ornamental fountains and birdbaths periodically, and aerate ornamental pools or stock them with predatory fish.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use (a wading pool becomes a mosquito producer if not used on a regular basis).
- Remember - mosquitoes will develop in any puddle that lasts for more than four days!

For more information about West Nile Virus, go to the St. Joseph County Department of Health's website (<http://www.sjcindiana.com/524/Environmental-Health-Division>) or contact them at 574-235-9750, Ext. 4. Media inquiries should be directed to Brett Davis, Environmental Health Assistant Director.

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