



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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MOSQUITO BORNE DISEASE PRESENCE INCREASING IN ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

In advance of the extended holiday weekend, the St. Joseph County Department of Health is warning residents of the increased presence of mosquito borne disease in St. Joseph County and the Michiana area at large. West Nile Virus has been detected in mosquitoes in three separate locations this past week in the areas of Mishawaka, Osceola, and Clay Township. A location within South Bend tested positive in August, as did another location in Penn Township. Neighboring Elkhart County has recorded fifteen cases of West Nile Virus in mosquitoes to date, and West Nile has also been detected in Berrien and Cass Counties in Michigan. Additionally, Eastern Equine Encephalitis has been detected in lower Michigan. There have not been any human cases of West Nile Virus or Eastern Equine Encephalitis in Indiana or Michigan to date in 2021.

The SJC Department of Health is continuing to monitor for mosquito borne disease and will address it whenever possible. However, due to the locations of some mosquito populations, spraying for mosquitoes is not always possible.

The SJC Department of Health is encouraging you to take the following steps to protect you and your family from mosquitoes:

- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are active (especially late afternoon, dusk to dawn and early morning);
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-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;
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of the home.

To reduce potential mosquito breeding grounds:

- Discard old tires, tin cans, ceramic pots or other containers that can hold water;
- 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;
- Frequently replace the water in pet bowls;
- Flush ornamental fountains and birdbaths periodically; aerate ornamental pools, or stock them with predatory fish.

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>).

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