



St. Joseph County Department of Health

"To promote health and wellness with compassion and integrity through partnerships, education, protection, and advocacy for all who reside in and visit St. Joseph County."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY **WEST NILE VIRUS FOUND IN ST. JOSEPH COUNTY**

A pool of West Nile Virus-positive mosquitoes has been identified in St. Joseph County, specifically in Portage Township. While the presence of West Nile Virus can potentially cause serious illness, there are simple precautions everyone can take to reduce their risk of exposure.

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

- Avoid being outdoors during prime mosquito biting times, which are dusk and dawn, when possible.
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or para-menthane diol to clothes and exposed skin.
- Wear a hat, long sleeves, and long pants to cover exposed skin in places where mosquitoes are especially active, such as wooded areas.
- Treat clothing and outdoor gear with 0.5% permethrin if camping or spending extended periods of time outdoors.
- Make sure all windows and doors have screens and that all screens are in good condition.
- Reduce mosquito breeding on and around your property.

To reduce mosquito breeding, homeowners can take these actions:

- Get rid of old tires, tin cans, or other containers that can hold water. Even a small bucket with stagnant water can become home to up to 1,000 mosquitoes.
- Tip bird baths, flowerpots, and other water-holding containers weekly and refill with clean water.
- Repair failed septic systems.
- Keep rain barrels covered with wire mesh that is smaller than adult mosquitoes.
- Clean roof gutters (roof gutters alone can produce millions of mosquitoes each season).
- Keep swimming pools clean and chlorinated.
- Drain and fill stagnant pools, puddles, ditches, or swampy places around the home and property.

The St. Joseph County Department of Health does treat for mosquitoes, including spraying when public health threats are detected. To find out more information, please visit the St. Joseph County Department of Health's website at: <https://www.in.gov/localhealth/stjosephcounty/environmental-health/pests-and-vectors/>

Please send all electronic correspondence for the Environmental Health Unit to envirohd@sjcindiana.gov

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