

**Jefferson County Public Health
West Nile Virus (WNV) and Zoonoses
Newsletter # 5
July 16, 2009**

WNV NATIONAL

Outside of Colorado, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and United States Geological Survey (USGS) have posted 8 human cases of WNV from (1) Arizona, (1) Arkansas, (1) Idaho, (1) Nevada, (2) South Dakota, (1) Tennessee, and (1) Texas.

For updates during the 2009 season visit the CDC and USGS websites at
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/Mapsactivity/surv&control07Maps.htm>

http://diseasemaps.usgs.gov/wnv_us_human.html

WNV COLORADO

There were no new confirmed human cases of WNV this week. The number stands at two, one from Jefferson County and one from Weld County.

There has been over 800 mosquito pools tested from Colorado counties by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) and there has been one positive WNV mosquito pool from the Fort Collins area. At this time last year there had been over 1000 mosquito pools submitted for testing.

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Zoonosis/wnv/index.html>

WNV JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County has one human case of West Nile virus.

Mosquito Surveillance: Ottertail Environmental continues to conduct larval surveillance and control and adult mosquito surveillance. They are monitoring and inspecting "mosquito breeding sites" throughout the county and will continue this process into the month of September.

During the past week, our contractor conducted mosquito trapping at 11 locations in the county. The trapping yielded over 1600 mosquitoes with 613 Culex mosquitoes. The highest numbers of Culex were caught at Arvada/Blunn Reservoir in Arvada (152) using the sum of 2 trap nights and Sanctuary Park in Lakewood (83) using the sum of 2 trap nights. To date 22 pools of culex mosquitoes have been submitted for testing from Jefferson County and all tests thus far have been negative for WNV.

During the past week there were 486 larval habitat site surveillance inspections and 119 of those sites were treated with larvicide. The wet and cooler weather this spring have slowed mosquito activity but the warmer weather is helping to increase the number of mosquitoes.

We have entered the peak time of mosquito season and we have increased our surveillance efforts. Past seasons indicate that 85 percent of people who became ill with West Nile virus were infected during a six-week period from July 1 through the second week of August so we continue to urge everyone to:

- Use insect repellent for **ALL** outdoor activities. **Use DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus**, (Follow The Label Directions Carefully).
- **DAWN and DUSK** are when mosquitoes that carry WNV are most active, so limit outdoor activity during these times and dress in long sleeves and pants when outdoors and be sure to cover feet and ankles.
- **DRAIN and EMPTY** all containers (toys, kiddie pools, flowerpots, buckets) in your yards because mosquitoes carrying WNV can bite at anytime and anywhere, even in your own yards. Make sure your gutters and downspouts are clean and running freely.
- Check your home to make sure all windows and doors have screens and are in good condition. This will reduce the chance of mosquitoes and bats gaining entry into your home.
- For additional information on repellents and on how to protect you and your family around home go to <http://health.jeffco.us> and go to WNV under animal borne diseases.

Mosquito Complaint Hotline:

Ottertail Environmental operates a toll free telephone line for citizen reports and concerns, that number is 1-888-774-2161 and locally the local number is 303 273-2878.

RABIES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County Public Health has tested 39 animals for rabies so far in 2009 with 17 bats, 4 raccoons, and 2 skunks tested and all animals tested thus far are negative for rabies. Bats historically have been the most common carriers of rabies in Colorado so everyone should remember not to approach or touch bats especially if they are seen during the day and/or acting strange. Last week a rabid bat with human exposure was reported next door in Gilpin County.

To prevent possible rabies exposure to you or your pets remember to keep your pets (cats, dogs, and ferrets) up-to-date on their vaccinations. Do not handle wild animals and instruct your children not to approach wild animals. Keep bats out of your home by sealing all openings and keep screens (in good condition) on all doors and windows.

PLAGUE IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County Public Health received positive test results for plague from a flea specimen collected from a prairie dog die-off at the Westminster Hills Open Space/Dog Park. The dog park is located at 105th Avenue and Simms Street. The area of concern includes the entire dog park and open space area from Simms Street west to Indiana Street. Plague is an infectious disease caused by *Yersinia pestis*, a bacterium. JCPH recommends that everyone living in or visiting the area in and around the Westminster Hills Open Space/Dog Park take the necessary precautions, listed below, to protect themselves and their pets from plague.

Prairie dogs are extremely susceptible to plague. Environmental Health Services submitted flea specimens to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for testing on Tuesday, July 14, 2009 and received results back this morning. The area is being closed to the public and posted with plague warnings signs today. Dr. Jim Dale, DVM, MPH, Director of Environmental Health Services said, "There have been no reported human cases of plague in the area and if precautions are taken the disease is not considered to be a threat to humans."

Health officials are advising visitors to the Westminster Hills Open Space/Dog Park, and all Jefferson County citizens, to take precautions. Plague is transmitted via fleas that have bitten plague-infected wild rodents. Cats most commonly contract the disease from flea bites, a rodent scratch/bite, or ingestion of a rodent. Dogs are generally resistant to plague however they may pick up and carry plague-infected fleas. Humans may be infected with plague through bites from infected fleas, by the cough from an infected animal, or by direct contact (i.e. through a bite) with blood or tissues of infected animals.

Residents are urged to talk with their veterinarian regarding effective flea control products -- always read and follow directions on flea product labels. People can protect themselves and their pets from plague by rodent-proofing their homes; maintaining litter and trash-free environments; storing food and garbage properly to prevent rodent access, and keeping domesticated animals indoors. When recreating, pet owners should use insect repellent, keep their pets on leashes, and use flea control products on pets. If these reasonable precautions are taken, the probability of contracting plague is extremely low.

Symptoms of plague in humans occur within two to seven days after exposure. Infected persons may experience fever, headache, weakness and rapidly developing pneumonia with shortness of breath; chest pain; cough; and sometimes bloody or watery saliva. The pneumonia progresses for two-to-four days and may cause respiratory failure and shock. Plague is treated with antibiotics. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should consult a physician.

For Additional Information on

WNV and other animal-borne diseases visit our web site at <http://health.jeffco.us> or contact dvolkel@jeffco.us or jdale@jeffco.us