



**Jefferson County
Department of Health
and Environment**

*To create, promote & enhance
health & vitality through
innovation, collaboration
and celebration*

Administration

1801 19th Street
Golden, CO 80401-1798
(303) 271-5700
Fax (303) 271-5702

Lakewood

260 South Kipling Street
Lakewood, CO 80226
(303) 232-6301
Fax (303) 239-7088

Arvada

6303 Wadsworth Bypass
Arvada, CO 80003
(303) 275-7500
Fax (303) 275-7503

Conifer

10875 US Hwy 285
Suite D202
Mountain Resource Center
Conifer, CO 80433
(303) 838-7552
Fax (303) 838-3781

Environmental Health

1801 19th Street
Golden, CO 80401
(303) 271-5755
Fax (303) 271-5760

Edgewater WIC

1981 B Sheridan Blvd.
Edgewater, CO 80214
(303) 239-9580
Fax (303) 239-9592

Vital Records

800 Jefferson County Parkway
Suite 1300
Golden, CO 80401
(303) 271-6450
Fax (303) 271-6451

*Public Health . . .
Everyday, Everywhere,
Everyone*

News Release

May 3, 2004

CONTACT:
Craig Sanders, EHS Supervisor
303-271-5759 or
Nancy Braden, Health Communications
303-239-7137

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Preparing for Mosquito Season and West Nile Virus 2004

Golden--Summer is almost upon us and with it mosquito season and the risk of contracting West Nile Virus. With the virus entrenched in 47 states and continuing to spread west, health officials, mosquito and animal control workers and others across Colorado and the U.S. are already busy planning and preparing mosquito surveillance and control activities as well as prevention messages. But, if there is one thing we learned last year, preventing mosquito bites is not something a department or agency can do for the public. Every individual needs to take it upon themselves to prevent mosquito bites and the risk of West Nile Virus (WNV) this mosquito season, which is generally May through September in Colorado.

“Despite awareness of the presence of this virus, many Jefferson County residents didn’t take action to prevent mosquito bites last season.” says Barbara Mertens, RN and Communicable Disease Control Program Coordinator. “This is worrisome because we now know how seriously debilitating and life threatening a bite from a mosquito can be.” While the virus causes little or no symptoms in approximately 80% of cases, others (of all ages), may experience serious illness and death. Severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several months, and neurological effects may be permanent.

Unfortunately, many of the Jefferson County cases of WNV apparently contracted the disease in their own back yards. The best way to protect yourself, your family and your community from West Nile Virus, is to follow the four D’s:

- DEET: Wear insect repellent containing 20-35% DEET.
- DRAIN: Drain or empty standing water around your home and neighborhood, since that is where mosquitoes lay their eggs
- DUSK/DAWN: Take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing during evening and early morning (dusk and dawn) or consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times when mosquitoes are most active
- DRESS: Dress in long sleeves and pants during dusk and dawn or in areas where mosquitoes are active.

Surveillance and Control

While the public prepares to prevent mosquito bites and begins draining standing water around their homes and neighborhoods, JCDHE has planned its surveillance

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West Nile Virus 2-2-2-2

and control activities. "While we expect the season to be less severe than last year, due to experiences of other states in their third year of WNV, we are not scaling down our mosquito surveillance and control activities or our educational activities," says Dr. Jim Dale, DVM, MPH, Environmental Health Services Director.

- Jefferson County has contracted with Colorado Mosquito Control in 2004, as it did in 2003, to perform mosquito surveillance and larviciding east of the hogback.
- JCDHE will perform surveillance and larviciding west of the hogback.

Dead Bird Collection

- East of Hogback: Because the presence of West Nile Virus has been clearly established in the plains area of Jefferson County, JCDHE will not be collecting dead birds, potential carriers of WNV, from areas east of the Hogback. However, citizens are asked to report dead bird locations by calling **303-239-7075**.
- West of Hogback: In areas west of the Hogback, dead birds (primarily crows, jays and magpies) will be collected after June 15, 2004. Please call Jefferson County Animal Control at **303-271-5070** to arrange collection. Prior to June 15, 2004, dead birds will not be collected, but citizens are requested to report the location of the dead bird to JCDHE at 303-239-7075.

Disposal of Dead Birds

- Residents are encouraged to dispose of dead birds appropriately. Casual contact with birds or other animals that have died from WNV has not been shown to transmit the virus to humans; however, common sense should be applied in disposing of them properly. Residents should pick up the dead bird with a plastic bag or shovel, place it in a bag and dispose of it as trash. Hands should be washed with soap and water.

Details of the Jefferson County WNV 2004 Surveillance Program

- Human and horse blood samples will be analyzed for WNV.
- The location of dead crows, ravens, magpies, and jays in Jefferson County will be tracked in a Geographical Information System (GIS) database. Samples from selected dead birds are analyzed for WNV.
- Potentially active mosquito breeding sites throughout the county are inspected periodically based on the weather. If mosquito larvae are present, larvicide will be applied to control mosquitoes.
- A network of 22 adult-mosquito traps is operated in strategic locations throughout the county. Trapped mosquitoes will be analyzed for WNV when appropriate.

For more information on West Nile Virus: www.fightthebitecolorado.com

JCDHE West Nile Virus Line: 303-239-7075

Colorado Help Line, recorded information: 877-462-2911

JCDHE website: <http://health.jeffco.us>

Colorado Mosquito Control www.comosquitocontrol.com

For citizen concerns/complaints

Colorado Mosquito Control (East of Hogback) 877-276-4306

JCDHE complaint line (West of Hogback) 303-239-7075

Speaker/Presentations on WNV

Tim Howard at Colorado Mosquito Control 303-558-8730

Dr. Jim Dale, JCDHE 303-271-5718