

**Jefferson County Public Health
Zoonosis and West Nile Virus (WNV)
Newsletter # 2
August 5, 2014**

ZOONOSIS

RABIES IN COLORADO
January 1 – July 30, 2014
Lab Confirmed Rabies Positive Animals

County	Bat	Skunk	Other Wildlife	Domestic	Total
Adams		3			3
Arapahoe	2	1			3
Boulder	5	3			8
Chaffee	1				1
Denver	2				2
Douglas			1 raccoon		1
Eagle	2				2
Elbert	3	1			4
El Paso	3				3
Jefferson	3				3
La Plata	2				2
Larimer	3				3
Mesa	1				1
Pueblo	1	1			2
Weld	5	9			14
Yuma				2 – cat	2
Totals	33	18	1	2	54

RABIES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

JCPH has submitted 80 animals for rabies testing thus far this year that include 40 bats, 10 skunks, and 10 raccoons with three of the bats testing positive for rabies.

Historically bats have been the common carrier of rabies in Colorado but because of the approaching skunk rabies animal control officers and veterinarians should remain alert to possible skunk rabies and are encouraged to recommend rabies vaccinations by a licensed veterinarian for ALL domestic animals including dogs, cats, and valuable livestock by a licensed veterinarian.

In addition to rabies vaccinations for pets and livestock, there are additional precautions to prevent possible exposure to rabies:

- Do not feed, touch, or handle wild animals.
- Teach children to leave wildlife alone.
- Do not leave pet food or livestock feed in areas accessible to wildlife.

- Maintain control of your pets by keeping cats indoors and keeping dogs under direct supervision.
- Spay or neuter your pets to reduce the number of unwanted or stray animals in your community.
- Call your local animal control office to remove stray animals from your neighborhood or Jefferson County Animal Control at 303-271-5070
- Call the Colorado Division of Wildlife at 303-297-1192 if you have problems with wild animals.

TULAREMIA IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

A rabbit specimen collected from a private home in the vicinity of the town of Bow Mar in Jefferson County, Colorado has tested positive for tularemia. Tularemia is a disease of animals and humans caused by the bacterium *Francisella tularensis*. It is also called “rabbit fever” and rabbits, hares, beavers and rodents are especially susceptible. Humans can also be infected with the bacteria, which is treatable with appropriate antibiotics.

Tularemia does not spread from person to person. Tularemia occurs year-round throughout the United States, except in Hawaii. In Colorado, there are generally two peak seasons: in May associated with tick bites and in October and November associated with rabbit hunting season. Colorado reports a few human cases of tularemia every year. “Tularemia is not uncommon in Colorado and the risk to the public is very low in this instance,” states JCPH Environmental Health Services Director, Jim Rada.

JCPH advises citizens to follow basic safety precautions to avoid exposure to animal-borne diseases, including:

- do not handle sick or dead animals, instruct children to leave wildlife alone
- wash hands thoroughly following recreational activities
- wear rubber gloves when skinning or handling animals, especially rabbits
- thoroughly cook meat from wild game, especially rabbit and squirrel meat, before eating
- use protective clothing and insect repellents to avoid deerfly and tick bites
- conduct frequent check for ticks
- avoid drinking untreated water

Symptoms usually appear 3-5 days after exposure and can include high fever, swollen lymph nodes and a sore or lesion at the site where the bacteria entered the body. In addition, if the bacteria are ingested, such as swallowing contaminated water, a person may have a sore throat, abdominal pain, vomiting or diarrhea. Persons who develop symptoms should contact their physician or health care provider.

WNV NATIONAL

Outside of Colorado, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and United States Geological Survey (USGS) have posted 50 human cases of WNV: Arizona (4), California (15), Georgia (1), Iowa (3), Louisiana (6), Mississippi (2), Missouri (1), Nebraska (4), New York (1), Oklahoma (1), South Dakota (9), Tennessee (1), Texas (1), and Wisconsin (1):

For updates during the WNV season visit the CDC and USGS websites at

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/surv&control.htm>

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

WNV COLORADO

A fifth human case of West Nile virus in Colorado has been identified in Mesa County this week. Other cases reported so far this year were in Arapahoe, Boulder, Pueblo and Saguache Counties. All five have been West Nile virus fever cases. August is traditionally the month where Colorado sees the most human cases of disease.

West Nile virus positive mosquito pools continue to be reported. Larimer County announced its first positive pools this week from Fort Collins and Loveland. In addition, the number of vector mosquitoes in Fort Collins is almost three times the historical average. So far this year, 1137 mosquito pools have been tested, and 51 (4.5%) pools have been positive for WNV. Positive pools have been found in Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Delta, Jefferson, Larimer, Mesa, Pueblo, and Weld counties.

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

WNV JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County has one positive mosquito pool for WNV and there are no verified reports of human cases in Jefferson County at this time.

In past years, standing water on properties throughout the County has been evaluated by the Jefferson County WNV contractor for the presence of mosquito larvae and treated if mosquito larvae were found. However, beginning in 2011, any standing water that has the potential to breed mosquitoes is the responsibility of the property owner, meaning they must provide all WNV monitoring and control activities on their property. This applies to all cities, parks, special districts, and private property in the county.

Eliminating standing water is the most effective way to stop mosquito breeding. If the water cannot be eliminated, the installation of an aerator to keep the water flowing is the next best step. If this is not possible, clean the edges of your pond of grass, moss, and bushes to eliminate the breeding sites for mosquito larvae.

Because there will not be any mosquito larval surveillance or control during the 2014 season and historically August is the month where Colorado sees most of its WNV cases JCPH strongly encourages everyone to follow the **4 “Ds”** listed below:

- Use **DEET** insect repellent for ALL outdoor activities (even out to get the mail). Additional insect repellents available are Picaridin and Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, (Always follow Label Directions Carefully).
- At **Dawn and Dusk** - outdoor activities should be limited, because it is at these times that mosquitoes are most active.
- **Dress** in long sleeves and pants when outdoors and be sure to cover feet and ankles if you have outdoor activities.
- **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 entering your home.

For additional information from repellents to how to protect you and your family around home go to <http://jeffco.us/public-health/healthy-environments/animal-borne-disease/> at WNV or www.FightTheBiteColorado.com.