



NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

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(8/20/25) Southern 7 Health Department Reports Positive WNV Mosquito Test in Pope County (The Third Positive Case in the Southern 7 Region in 2025)

Southern 7 Health Department (S7HD) has confirmed a positive test for West Nile Virus (WNV) in mosquitoes for the southern seven county region of Illinois. This is the third positive case of WNV in mosquitoes documented by the health department in 2025. No human cases of WNV have been reported so far this year in the region.

On August 20, S7HD Environmental Health Services confirmed the positive case was collected from a mosquito trap set in Pope County. This follows previous reports of positive cases in mosquitoes tested on July 24 in Massac County and in Union County on July 30. Traps were placed in each of the lower seven counties in May and are tested weekly through mid-October.

Residents are encouraged to take precautions to Fight the Bite including practicing the three “R’s” – Reduce, Repel, and Report to prevent contracting West Nile Virus.

- **REDUCE** - make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut. Eliminate, or refresh each week, all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires, and any other containers.
- **REPEL** - when outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a light-colored, long-sleeved shirt, and apply insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR 3535 according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants.
- **REPORT** – report locations where you see water sitting stagnant for more than a week such as roadside ditches, flooded yards, and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes. The local health department or city government may be able to add larvicide to the water, which will kill any mosquito eggs.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a *Culex pipiens* mosquito, commonly called a house mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Common symptoms include fever, nausea, headache and muscle aches. Symptoms may last from a few days to a few weeks. However, four out of five people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms. In rare cases, severe illness including meningitis, encephalitis, or even death, can occur. People older than 60 and individuals with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe illness from West Nile virus.

Trapping mosquitoes will continue until early fall. For more information, call Miranda Adams, S7HD Environmental Health Services Director at 618-634-2297 x. 973114, visit www.southern7.org, or download the Southern 7 app.

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