



Public Health
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Shelby County Health Department

News Release

Shelby County Health Department
814 Jefferson Ave., Memphis, TN 38105

NUMBER: **DATE:** Tuesday, May 29th, 2012
FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE **CONTACT:** Risk Communication Coordinator
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West Nile Virus Detected in 38107, 38122, 38053, 38127, and 38002 ZIP Codes

MEMPHIS, TN – The Shelby County Health Department has received confirmation of mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus within the areas of ZIP codes **38107, 38122, 38053, 38127, and 38002**.

Since April, the Shelby County Health Department's Vector Control Program has treated areas by applying larvicides to standing bodies of water. These actions are consistent with the Health Department's efforts to be proactive in decreasing the adult mosquito population. Larviciding is the practice of applying an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insecticide to areas where mosquito breeding has been confirmed and is the most effective way of eliminating mosquito populations.

As an additional precaution, the Health Department will also conduct truck-mounted spraying (adulticiding) of EPA-approved insecticides, weather permitting, in portions specific ZIP codes according to the following schedule:

Wednesday, May 30th

8:15p.m. – 11:15 p.m.
ZIP Codes: 38053, 38127

Thursday, May 31st

8:15 p.m. – 11:15 p.m.
ZIP Codes: 38108, 38111, 38117, 38120, 38122, 38128, 38133, 38134

Monday, June 4th

8:15 p.m. – 11:15 p.m.
ZIP Codes: 38103, 38104, 38105, 38107, 38108, 38112, 38114, 38118, 38126

Individuals with chronic health problems such as asthma or other lung conditions may want to remain indoors during the time of spraying if they live in one of the affected areas. Residents who **do not** want their residences to be sprayed should contact the Health Department's Vector Control Program at **(901) 324-5547**.

Humans can catch the West Nile virus through being bitten by an infected mosquito. Although West Nile virus can occasionally cause severe disease, most human infections are mild, resulting in fever, headache and body aches that last only a few days. Symptoms of severe disease include a high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma or convulsions. Persons over age 50 and those with compromised immune systems are at higher risk of severe disease. They should especially be careful to avoid mosquito bites.

Citizens are also encouraged to be vigilant as it relates to controlling mosquito populations around their homes and businesses. Citizens are encouraged to:

- Wear DEET-containing mosquito repellants according to label directions
- Eliminate standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs. Check properties for objects - including old tires, flower pots and drip plates, tin cans, buckets, and children's toys - that collect rainwater and either drain or dispose of the water
- Install or repair windows and door screens
- Empty, clean and refill birdbaths and small wading pools weekly
- Empty and refill pets' water bowls every few days
- Repair failed septic systems
- Repair leaky outside faucets
- Clean rain gutters and down spouts
- Secure swimming pool covers tightly and remove any standing water after rainfall
- Store wheelbarrows, canoes and boats upside down

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- Stock ornamental lawn ponds with fish (Gambusia) that eat mosquito larvae (Gambusia fish are available FREE from the Vector Control Program)

Although most human cases of West Nile virus in Shelby County have occurred during the months of August and September, it is important for everyone to continue to use mosquito repellants before going outside to work or play, especially during evening and nighttime hours.

(End of Report)