



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Sept. 18, 2013

For More Information, Contact:  
Alicia Lepp  
Division of Disease Control  
North Dakota Department of Health  
Phone: 701.328.2378  
E-mail: [alepp@nd.gov](mailto:alepp@nd.gov)

### **North Dakota Sees Steep Rise in West Nile Virus Cases**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health has seen a 95 percent increase in reported West Nile virus (WNV) cases in the last two weeks. State health officials are reminding people to continue taking precautions against mosquito bites and possible West Nile virus infection.

As of Sept. 18, 2013, North Dakota reported 76 human WNV cases, up 37 cases since Sept. 3, 2013. In addition to human cases, there have been nine asymptomatic blood donors, one horse, six birds and 20 mosquito pools that have tested positive for WNV.

“We are continuing to see WNV positive cases being reported,” said Alicia Lepp, epidemiologist with the North Dakota Department of Health. “Even though the weather is cooling down, people still need to protect themselves against mosquito bites. With fall activities starting, such as football and hunting, people need to be aware that mosquitoes will remain active and pose a risk of WNV transmission until the first hard freeze occurs.”

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes, the state health department recommends the following protective measures:

- Use insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR 3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or permethrin when outdoors. Always follow the directions on the manufacturer’s label.
- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most likely to bite.
- When possible, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts while outside.
- Eliminate stagnant water and leaf debris in containers around homes where mosquitoes can lay their eggs (e.g., buckets, flowerpots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths).
- Keep mosquitoes from entering your home by repairing screens in windows and doors.
- Keep the grass around your home trimmed.

– more –

The common symptoms of West Nile virus include fever, headache, body aches and rash. People with more severe illness may experience symptoms such as stiff neck, confusion, paralysis, coma and even death. Fortunately, most people infected with West Nile virus develop the less severe form of the disease or develop no symptoms at all.

West Nile virus activity will be updated Wednesday mornings each week throughout the West Nile virus season on the Department of Health's West Nile virus website at [www.ndhealth.gov/wnv](http://www.ndhealth.gov/wnv).

For more information, contact Alicia Lepp, North Dakota Department of Health, at 1.800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378.

– 30 –

*Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at [www.nddohpressroom.gov](http://www.nddohpressroom.gov).*

*Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ndhealth](http://www.facebook.com/ndhealth) or twitter at [twitter.com/nddoh](http://twitter.com/nddoh).*