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TO: DeKalb County News Media
FROM: Lisa Gonzalez
Public Health Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Mosquito Trap Near Genoa Tests Positive for WNV

The DeKalb County Health Department monitors for WNV activity in the County. Recently, Health Protection staff collected a batch of mosquitoes that tested positive for West Nile Virus. This batch was collected near Genoa. This is the first time this year a Health Department mosquito trap has yielded a positive test for West Nile.

Although people usually notice mosquitoes during rainy conditions, those mosquitoes are commonly called floodwater or nuisance mosquitoes and typically do not carry West Nile virus. In hot, dry weather, mosquitoes that do carry West Nile virus breed in stagnant water, like street catch basins and ditches, and multiply rapidly. Remember, it's never too early for you to inspect your home and yard for sources of standing water where these mosquitoes are likely to breed.

West Nile virus transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Most people with the virus have no clinical symptoms of illness, but some may become ill three to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito. Illness from West Nile is usually mild and includes fever, headache and body aches, but serious illness, such as encephalitis and meningitis, and death are possible. Persons older than 50 years of age have the highest risk of severe disease.

Recommendations to prevent mosquito breeding include:

- Discard old tires, buckets, drums or any water holding containers. Poke holes in tires used as bumpers on docks
- Keep roof gutters and downspouts clear of debris
- Keep trash containers covered
- Empty plastic wading pools at least once a week and store indoors when not in use
- Drain unused swimming pools
- Fill in tree rot holes and hollow stumps that hold water
- Change the water in bird baths and plant urns at least once a week

Recommendations to prevent mosquito bites include:

- Whenever possible, limit outdoor activity at dusk
- Wear light-colored clothing that minimizes exposed skin and provides some protection from mosquito bites
- Make sure door and window screens fit tightly and that all holes are repaired
- Apply insect repellent that includes DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535 according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants.

Additional information about West Nile virus can be found on the DeKalb County Health Department's Web site at <http://dekalbcounty.org/Health/environmental/other.html> You can also visit the Illinois Department of Public Health's Web site at www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter!

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