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For Immediate Release

Subject: 1st Batch of West Nile Positive Mosquitoes

KANKAKEE MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS

It has been confirmed that there has been one pool, or groups, of mosquitoes collected from a trap in Kankakee County has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV).

This is the first pool of mosquitoes to test positive for WNV this year in Kankakee County. For the 2023 season so far, Illinois Department Public Health has reported 30 WNV positive counties.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of the *Culex pipiens* mosquito, commonly called the northern house mosquito, which 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 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.

Precautions to ‘Fight the Bite’ include practicing the three “R’s” – reduce, repel, and report.

- **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 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 eliminate mosquito larvae.

Additional information about WNV can be found on the Illinois Department of Public Health’s website at <http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/west-nile-virus>