



Media Release

**For Immediate Release
September 3, 2024**

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BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN TAZEWELL COUNTY

Tazewell County officials have received a report that a bird recently collected in Tazewell County has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The bird was collected on Wednesday, August 21 in Washington before being sent to the state lab for testing.

West Nile Virus is a virus spread through the bite of an infected *Culex* mosquito and is often transmitted to birds through a bite. Once a bird is infected, other mosquitoes can bite the infected bird and become infected with WNV before passing it to humans.

Most people (8 in 10) who are infected with WNV do not experience symptoms. If symptoms are present, mild cases may cause a slight fever or headache. More severe cases of the infection may result in a fast-developing high fever with head and body aches, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, and in some severe cases, paralysis, or death. Symptoms typically happen from three to 14 days after a person is bitten by an infected mosquito. People 60 years of age or older are at the highest risk for serious illness associated with WNV.

TCHD conducts regular testing of mosquito pools throughout Tazewell County and encourages residents to do what they can to help prevent the spread of West Nile Virus. TCHD encourages residents to follow “The 3 R’s for Protecting Against Mosquitoes”.

1. **Reduce:** Reduce the number of mosquitoes by reporting eliminating instances of standing water (water that has sat in the same spot for more than 7-10 days). These areas are breeding grounds for mosquitoes and for West Nile Virus. This can include keeping

outdoor trash cans closed so they do not fill with rainwater; getting rid of old tires, tin cans, buckets, drums, bottles, or any other water-holding containers; and emptying plastic wading pools at least once a week and storing indoors when not in use. For more examples of standing water, visit www.tazewellhealth.org/234/Mosquito-Awareness

2. **Repel:** Repel mosquitoes by using the proper insect repellent. Use a repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. When possible, avoid being outdoors from dusk to dawn. This is when mosquitoes are most active. If you are outside during these times, wear loose-fitting, light-colored, and long-sleeved tops and long pants made of tightly woven materials to keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
3. **Report:** Report instances of standing water that have sat for more than 7-10 days. To report standing water in Tazewell County, visit www.tazewellhealth.org/235/Standing-Water-Report.

For more information on West Nile Virus, visit dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/west-nile-virus.html.

For questions regarding the positive case in Tazewell County or for media inquiries, call JD Raucci at 309-210-7805.

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