



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**West Nile Virus Detected at High Levels in Mosquito Traps**

**Weld County, CO** – The vector index—a calculation to determine human risk for West Nile Virus (WNV) infection—is at a high level in Weld County. A vector index that exceeds 0.75 indicates an increased risk for human infection. This past week, the Greeley/Evans area tested at 0.74 and the Johnstown/Milliken/Platteville area tested at 1.82. “The recent wet and continued warm weather has created the perfect conditions for the Culex mosquito and WNV,” said Mark E. Wallace, MD, MPH, Executive Director of the Weld County Health Department. “It’s extremely important to avoid getting bit by mosquitoes.” Many municipalities have established mosquito control programs, but “the public still needs to be vigilant,” said Wallace. Currently, there are no reported human cases of WNV in Weld County.

West Nile virus symptoms can appear 3 to 14 days after an infection. Initial symptoms can include fever, headache, nausea and vomiting, muscle aches and weakness and rash, but most infected people don’t exhibit any symptoms. If a person develops symptoms, he or she should see a doctor immediately. There are no medications to treat or vaccines to prevent West Nile virus infection, and less than one percent of infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal, neurological illness.

Health officials recommend following the four “D’s” to prevent mosquito bites:

**DRAIN** standing water around your house weekly. Remember to drain water from tires, cans, flowerpots, clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, toys and puddles.

**DUSK** and **DAWN** are when mosquitoes are most active. Limit outdoor activities and take precautions to prevent mosquito bites during these times.

**DEET** is an effective ingredient to look for in insect repellents. Other repellents containing picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol are also effective against mosquitoes. Always follow label instructions carefully.

**DRESS** in long sleeves and pants in areas where mosquitoes are active.

For more information about the preventing mosquito bites, visit: [www.weldgov.com](http://www.weldgov.com)

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