

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT



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[www.weldhealth.org](http://www.weldhealth.org)



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Mead Resident is First Human West Nile Virus Case of Mosquito Season

**Weld County, CO** – An adult resident from the town of Mead is in the hospital for neuro-invasive West Nile Virus—the most serious form of the illness. The Mead resident became ill on July 27 and was hospitalized the next day. Tests results confirmed West Nile Virus (WNV) yesterday. This marks the first human case of WNV in Colorado for the 2018 mosquito season.

Mosquito traps in Weld County found the vector index—a calculation to determine human risk for WNV infection—is still low. However, the vector index is likely to increase in the ensuing weeks—which means the risk for human infection will also increase. A vector index that exceeds 0.75 indicates an increased risk for human infection. This past week, the Greeley and Evans area (Zone 1) tested at 0.00, the Johnstown, Milliken, and Platteville area (Zone 2) tested at 0.67, and the Firestone, Dacono and Fort Lupton area (Zone 3) tested at 0.40. “The recent wet and increasing hot weather has created the perfect conditions for the Culex mosquito that carries West Nile Virus,” 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 needs to be vigilant, because this illness has a permanent summer presence in our state,” said Wallace.

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 healthcare professional immediately. There are no medications to treat or vaccines to prevent WNV infection. Less than one percent of infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal, neuro-invasive 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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