



Joint Media Release

For immediate release: July 12, 2023

Contact: Stephanie Badillo-Sanchez, Communications Specialist

509-941-7364

West Nile Virus Positive Mosquito Pools Detected in Yakima County, Close to Benton County

Yakima, WA- The Yakima Health District received a report from Benton County Mosquito Control District of the first West Nile virus positive mosquito pools collected in Washington this year. The West Nile virus positive mosquito pools were collected from the Grandview Sewage Lagoons in Yakima County, very closely bordering Benton County. While so far this year there have been no human or animal cases of West Nile virus in Washington, it is crucial to follow preventative measures to avoid West Nile virus.

West Nile virus is spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. To prevent West Nile virus, avoid being bitten by mosquitos:

- Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insect repellent, following label instructions
- Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants when outside, particularly at dawn and dusk, when mosquitos are most active
- Take steps to control mosquitos indoors and outdoors:
 - Use screen on windows and doors
 - Stop mosquitos from laying eggs in or near water by eliminating mosquito breeding sites. Examples of areas of standing water where mosquitos can lay their eggs include: buckets, rain gutters, old tires, bird baths, ponds, or anywhere water collects. Empty, cover, turn over, or throw out items that hold water to prevent mosquitos from laying eggs.

Most people, 8 out of 10, infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. In some cases, West Nile virus can cause severe disease. About 1 in 150 people who are infected develop a severe illness affecting the central nervous system that results in encephalitis or meningitis. People over the age of 60 and people with certain conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension, or kidney disease have a greater risk for severe illness. If individuals experience symptoms of West Nile virus, they should contact their healthcare provider.

While there is no vaccine to prevent West Nile virus infection in people, individuals can prevent West Nile by eliminating mosquito habitat and protecting themselves from mosquito bites.

The Yakima Health District is working in coordination with Washington State Department of Health, Benton County Mosquito Control, and Benton-Franklin Health District on West Nile virus detections and preventative measures to provide education to community members.

Additional Information

[CDC: West Nile Virus](#)

[CDC: West Nile Virus Prevention](#)

[CDC: West Nile Virus Symptoms](#)

###