

Delaware General Health District

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NEWS RELEASE

HEALTH DISTRICT COMMENCING MOSQUITO TRAPPING FOR DISEASE TESTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DELAWARE, Oh., July 7, 2009 – The time has arrived once again for residents to protect themselves against mosquito bites and take steps against mosquito breeding.

The Delaware General Health District is starting its summertime mosquito trapping program to monitor for diseases which mosquitoes spread.

Mosquitoes are a public health concern because they spread La Crosse Encephalitis, West Nile virus, and other diseases. In Ohio, 147 people have been infected with West Nile virus over the last four years, resulting in 10 deaths. About 20 Ohioans get La Crosse Encephalitis in an average year. The latter disease often requires hospitalization, and both can cause neurological difficulties that last for years.

West Nile virus has appeared in Delaware County in mosquitoes and/or birds collected by the Delaware General Health District in each of the last several years, and a human case of La Crosse Encephalitis last occurred here in 2005.

Mosquito prevention is the best precaution against these diseases. Empty standing water out of flower pots, bird baths, and other outdoor containers regularly, and keep gutters and other potential mosquito breeding places free of stagnant water. Large areas of standing water can be treated with larvicide, sold commercially as “Mosquito Dunks.” The Health District’s Residential Services staff has treated some mosquito problem areas with larvicide already this season.

Residents also should protect themselves against mosquito bites, particularly early in the evening when mosquitoes are most active. If you must go outdoors, protect yourself by wearing

light-colored long pants and a long-sleeved shirt and by wearing mosquito repellent containing DEET or Picaridin. Apply repellent according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Starting this week, the local Health District will set up to 10 mosquito traps nightly at varying locations throughout Delaware County. Mosquitoes that are caught will be shipped to the Ohio Department of Health laboratory for West Nile Virus testing.

The Health District also will log reports of dead crows and blue jays, birds which are susceptible to dying from West Nile virus. Anyone finding a freshly deceased crow or blue jay is asked to report it to the Health District by phoning 740-368-1700. Dead birds are not being collected this year because the state laboratory is not testing them.

The Health District will fog to kill adult mosquitoes if mosquito-borne diseases are detected through mosquito trapping or a report of a human disease case. Fogging plans will be announced to local news media, posted on www.delawarehealth.org, and recorded on the Health District Information Line, 740-203-2015.

Fogging takes place between sunset and midnight along public roads and streets. Anyone who does not want mosquito fogging adjacent to their property can phone the Health District at 740-368-1700 and ask to be placed on the "no-fog list."