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For Immediate Release

Subject: 1st Batch of West Nile Positive Mosquitoes

BOURBONNAIS MOSQUITOES POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS

It has been confirmed that there has been one pool of mosquitoes collected from a trap in Bourbonnais that has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV).

This is the first pool of mosquitoes to test positive for WNV this year in Kankakee County. For the 2020 season so far, IDPH has reported 17 counties with positive WNV batches and 1 human case (although human cases are underreported). In 2019 IDPH reported 46 counties with positive WNV batches and 28 human cases including one death.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of the *Culex pipiens* mosquito, commonly called the northern house mosquito, which has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Common symptoms include fever, nausea, headache and muscle aches. Symptoms may last from a few days to a few weeks. However, four out of five people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms. In rare cases, severe illness including meningitis, or even death, can occur. People older than 60 and individuals with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe illness from West Nile virus.

PRECAUTIONS TO FIGHT THE BITE INCLUDE PRACTICING THE THREE “R’S” – REDUCE, REPEL, AND REPORT.

- **REDUCE** - make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut.
 - Eliminate, or refresh each week, all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires, and any other containers.
- **REPEL** - when outdoors, wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and apply insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR 3535 according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants.
- **REPORT** – report locations where you see water sitting stagnant for more than a week such as roadside ditches, flooded yards, and similar locations that may produce mosquitoes. The local health department or city government may be able to add larvicide to the water, which will kill any mosquito larvae.

Monitoring for West Nile virus in Illinois includes laboratory tests for mosquito batches, dead crows, blue jays, robins and other perching birds as well as testing humans with West Nile virus-like symptoms. People who observe a sick or dying crow, blue jay, robin or other perching bird should contact their local health department, which will determine if the bird will be picked up for testing.

Additional information about WNV can be found on the Illinois Department of Public Health's website at <http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/west-nile-virus>

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