

Wabash County Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: 08/11/2025

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS URGE PRECAUTIONS AS WEST NILE VIRUS DETECTED IN Wabash County

Wabash County—The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) has notified the Wabash County Health Department that mosquito samples collected in Wabash County have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). 9 WNV positive mosquito pools out of 10 tested in Wabash County. The department recommends taking precautions against mosquito bites to reduce the risk of disease caused by mosquito-borne viruses, which in addition to WNV include Eastern equine encephalitis (triple-E) virus, and La Crosse virus.

State and local health officials recommend that all Hoosiers take the following steps to prevent mosquito-borne diseases:

- Use insect repellent. Apply EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone according to the label instructions.
- Wear protective clothing. Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants. Consider treating clothing and gear with a permethrin product (note: permethrin products should not be applied directly to the skin).
- Know when to expect mosquito bites. The *Culex* species of mosquito is mostly responsible for WNV and is active mostly between dusk and 1 a.m., and at dawn. Taking precautions to avoid bites between dusk and dawn is recommended.

Furthermore, homeowners, landlords and property managers should take the following steps to control mosquitoes indoors and outdoors:

- Install screens on windows and doors and keep them in good repair.
- Look for containers that could hold water such as trash, tires, buckets, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpot saucers, or trash containers.
- Prevent mosquitoes from accessing containers. This can be done by removing trash; moving items indoors; covering or overturning items not in use; drilling holes in the bottom of trash containers; installing screens on rain barrels; replacing water in pet bowls daily; and flushing birdbaths, fountains, and other containers at least once a week.
- Maintain properties and landscaping in good condition. This includes regularly servicing septic systems, keeping grass mowed and shrubs trimmed, cleaning gutters regularly, and aerating ornamental pools or stocking them with predatory fish.

Most people infected with West Nile virus have no symptoms or only mild flu-like symptoms which can include fever, headache, body aches, joint pain, vomiting, diarrhea, or a rash. Some people infected with West Nile virus will develop a more severe form of the disease affecting the nervous system, including inflammation in the brain and spinal cord, muscle paralysis, or even death. People older than 60 years old and those with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of severe West Nile virus disease. People who think they may have West Nile virus disease should see their healthcare providers.

To view the Indiana Mosquito-Borne Activity Dashboard and learn more, visit:

<https://www.in.gov/health/idepd/zoonotic-and-vectorborne-epidemiology-entomology/vector-borne-diseases/mosquito-borne-diseases/>.

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