

For Immediate Release

August 18, 2017

## Increasing Risk of West Nile Virus in Five Hills Health Region West Nile Virus infected mosquitoes identified.

The Five Hills Health Region is advising residents that the risk of West Nile Virus (WNV) infection is increasing in the area after some *Culex tarsalis* mosquitoes caught in surveillance traps were found to be infected with WNV. The provincial mosquito surveillance program identified infected mosquitoes in traps collected on August 10th in the Moose Jaw area.

While the risk of infection remains low, residents are encouraged to follow the “FIVE Ds” to decrease their risk of infection from WNV throughout the rest of the summer:

1. Wear an effective insect repellent containing **DEET**. Repellents with icaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are also effective. Apply according to directions.
2. **DRAIN** standing water. Mosquitoes require water to complete their life cycle. Eliminate or reduce all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs like wading pools, wheelbarrows, containers, rain downspouts and gutters, pet dishes and birdbaths, etc. Reduce places in your yard where adult mosquitoes can thrive like tall grasses and weeds.
3. Reduce the amount of time spent outdoors between **DUSK and DAWN**. The mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus are most active at dawn and dusk in the early evening. They are especially active for two hours after sunset.
4. **DRESS** appropriately. Wear long sleeves and long pants (wear light-weight clothing to minimize the potential for heat-induced illnesses). Mosquitoes may be more attracted to individuals wearing perfumes and colognes.
5. Mosquito-proof your home. Make sure that **DOORS** and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

According to, FHHR Medical Health Officer, Dr. Lanre Medu, this advisory is highly relevant to some Region residents. *"Of particular interest are persons who work outside, especially at dusk and dawn, and those who are camping over the next few weeks. These persons are at higher risk of being bitten by mosquitoes and should pay particular attention to preventing these bites."*

While the risk due to *Culex tarsalis* mosquitoes is increasing it is still low. The Region is not advising of a need for mosquito control activities through municipal spraying programs at this time.

For more information on WNV, go to the [Government of Saskatchewan website](#).

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