



Tom Barrett
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE
Commissioner of Health

Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990
web site: www.milwaukee.gov/health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 1, 2013

Contact: Sarah DeRoo
Office (414) 286-3548
Cell (414) 708-4060

City of Milwaukee Health Department Takes Action to ‘Fight the Bite’

Targeted larvicide placement and enhanced surveillance part of effort to prevent West Nile virus

MILWAUKEE – The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) has placed more than 2,250 doses of mosquito larvicide in targeted locations throughout Milwaukee as part of its seasonal West Nile virus prevention program.

“The City of Milwaukee has yet to see a confirmed case of West Nile virus in a community member this year,” said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker. “Placing larvicide in targeted areas and increasing surveillance for the illness are key steps to helping Milwaukee residents remain healthy.”

At this time, the state of Wisconsin has one confirmed case of West Nile virus in an individual in 2013. In 2012, the state reported the highest number of West Nile virus cases since 2002, confirming 57 cases and five deaths statewide, including 15 cases and one death in the city of Milwaukee.

Most West Nile virus infections occur between June and September, and are transmitted to humans through a mosquito bite. Not all mosquitos carry the virus, and only 20 percent of individuals bit by an infected mosquito will develop symptoms such as fever, rash, headache, and joint pain. Individuals most susceptible to serious illness and hospitalization associated with West Nile virus are those over 60 years of age and those with underlying medical conditions such as cancer, diabetes, and hypertension.

Each year, the MHD conducts increased surveillance among bird, mosquito, and human populations for West Nile virus. This includes placement of mosquito traps for surveillance purposes as well as placing larvicide treatment in select locations. This year, larvicide is being placed in combined sewer catch basins that can serve as mosquito breeding grounds. In addition to enhanced surveillance and mosquito population control efforts, the MHD is also conducting outreach to youth day camps and senior centers as part of its “Fight the Bite” campaign.

The MHD reminds individuals to take steps to prevent mosquito bites, including:

- Mosquito-proofing your home by fixing holes in screens, windows, and doors.
- Wearing light-colored, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants at dawn and dusk, when mosquitos are most active.
- Preventing mosquitos from breeding by removing stagnant water from areas such as bird baths, flowerpots, and gutters.
- Using an insect repellent with DEET, IR 3535, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit www.milwaukee.gov/health.

###

Think Health. Act Now!

