



MEDIA RELEASE

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917-6413

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Katharine Killen
865-215-5534 office
865-755-1121 cell

Sept. 12, 2017

Pedigo Road area added to mosquito spray schedule

Knoxville, Tenn. – A bird in the Pedigo Road area of North Knox County has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). Following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protocol, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) will spray for mosquitoes in this area on **Thursday, Sept. 14 between 8:45 p.m. and 2 a.m.**, weather permitting, to reduce the Culex mosquito population and the risk of WNV spreading to humans. Signs will be posted in the affected neighborhoods to alert residents, who are asked to stay inside during spraying and keep pets inside or in the backyard. Spray area details are below, a map is included.

“As we’ve talked about, crows and jays are considered a sentinel or an indicator of the presence of West Nile virus in an area,” said KCHD Environmental Health Director Ronnie Nease. “They do not transmit West Nile to humans, but they get it from mosquitoes just like we do, so we want to decrease the Culex mosquito population in that area to reduce the risk of transmission to humans.”

To prevent mosquito bites and reduce mosquito habitats, officials recommend the following:

- Apply repellants to skin often; these can include lotions, liquids or sprays. The CDC recommends the use of repellants that contain DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane 3, 8-diol, and IR3535. The duration of protection varies by repellant; read labels on products to determine when reapplications are necessary for optimal protection.
- Wear long, loose and light-colored shirts and pants and wear socks.
- Treat clothing with permethrin or purchase pretreated permethrin clothing.
- Dispose of, regularly empty, or turn over any water-holding containers on your property such as tires, cans, flower pots, children’s toys or trash cans.
- To prevent breeding in large water-holding devices, including bird baths or garden pools, use larvicides such as mosquito torpedoes or mosquito dunks. If used properly, larvicides will not harm animals.
- More tips can be found at: <http://www.knoxcounty.org/health/mosquitoes.php>

“We continue to encourage the public to avoid bare-hand contact with all dead animals,” added Nease. “While there is no evidence that a person can get West Nile from handling live or dead infected birds, we still urge folks to be cautious. If you must touch a dead bird, use gloves or an inverted plastic bag to place the bird in a garbage bag.”

Pedigo Road spray area:

Pedigo Ridge Road; a portion of Pedigo Road south of Long Hollow Road; and a portion of Greenwell Road east of Pedigo Road will be treated Thursday, Sept. 14, weather permitting. Follow-up spraying is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 28.

The Pedigo Road area treatment is in addition to sprayings previously scheduled for Sept. 14 in the West Hills, Dadrick Road and Chapman Highway areas. A complete schedule is available online at



knoxcounty.org/health. Any decisions to reschedule sprayings based on weather conditions, such as rain, low temperatures or high winds, will be made at the time of spraying and will be announced the following morning.

To reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease, KCHD conducts a West Nile virus control program during the summer and fall months. As the weather warms each spring, public health professionals begin a weekly process of trapping and testing mosquitoes for WNV, a mosquito-borne disease which can infect humans, horses and birds. From March until the first frost, KCHD also uses larvicides in areas with standing water to prevent mosquito proliferation. These efforts are in addition to KCHD's work to assess and monitor for other mosquito-borne illnesses. More information is available by calling 865-215-5200 or visiting www.knoxcounty.org/health.

About Knox County Health Department:

The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is a governmental agency dedicated to making every person a healthy person. As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, KCHD's mission is to encourage, promote and assure the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices. The organization conducts disease surveillance, prevention and control; emergency preparedness; nutrition and physical activity promotion; tobacco use prevention; health equity promotion; immunizations; and much more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

###

Area scheduled for spraying Thursday, Sept. 14, 2017, between 8:45 p.m. and 2 a.m.:

