



MALHEUR COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

251 B Street West, #9 Vale, Oregon 97918 (541) 473-5186 Fax (541) 473-5168

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To: News Agencies

From: Brian D. Wickert, REHS
Malheur County Environmental Health Director

Re: Positive Bird in Vale

A Magpie found in Vale on July 15, 2007 tested positive for West Nile Virus. This positive bird is the first sign of WNV in Malheur County this year. We should expect human cases to follow this positive test.

Malheur County Environmental Health and Malheur County Health Department would like to encourage all residents of Malheur County to take the proper steps to protect themselves this summer. We especially warn those over the age of 50 and that are immune compromised. August and September are very high mosquito activity months. The most effective way to avoid West Nile Virus is to prevent mosquito bites. The following steps should be taken to limit your exposure to WNV infection:

- ◆ Use an insect repellent containing one of the following active ingredients: DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide), Picaridin (KBR 3023), or oil of lemon eucalyptus (p-menthane 3, 8-diol (PMD)). Always follow the directions on the package for application instructions.
 - Use during all activities outside
 - Reapply if necessary (Sweating and getting wet can wash repellent off)
- ◆ Avoid outside activity during dawn and dusk
- ◆ Wear protective clothing such as long pants and long sleeved shirts.

Other good precautions:

- ◆ Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flower pots,

buckets, and barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths on a weekly basis. Drill drainage holes in tire swings so that water will drain out. Keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when not in use.

- ◆ Make sure doors and window have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

West Nile Virus is an arbovirus (arthropod-borne virus) that is transmitted to birds and mammals by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Mosquitoes can pass West Nile Virus to vertebrates including humans, birds, horses, and other mammals.

In 80 percent of people West Nile Virus causes no symptoms to those infected. Up to about 20 percent of people who become infected will display mild symptoms such as fever, headache, fatigue, or body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. These symptoms typically last just a few days. About one in 150 people infected with West Nile Virus develop severe illness. Severe symptoms associated with West Nile can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness, paralysis, encephalitis, and meningitis.