



# County of Malheur

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

1108 S.W. 4th Street • Ontario, OR 97914 • (541) 889-7279

News Release  
July 16, 2012

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### **State's first mosquitoes with West Nile virus detected in Malheur County**

According to Oregon Public Health Officials, West Nile virus, a mild flu-like disease spread by mosquitoes, has been reported to have been found in three testing sites in Malheur County, Oregon. Two sites were found in Harper, one in Little Valley.

Health officials are advising people in Malheur County to take precautions against mosquitoes in order to avoid the risk of infection. We want people in that area to be especially careful to avoid getting mosquito bites. The risk of contracting West Nile virus may be low, but we do encourage people to take appropriate precautions to protect themselves against mosquito bites," said Emilio DeBess, D.V.M., M.P.V.M., Oregon Public Health veterinarian.

Because of the number of mosquito pools testing positive in any area could lead to infection, health officials recommend people and animals be protected against mosquito bites.

Eighty percent of people infected with West Nile virus exhibit no symptoms. Of the remaining 20 percent, most have very mild symptoms, such as fever, headaches, and nausea, which can last from three to six days. In a few cases, more severe symptoms occur, including convulsions or disorientation. The central nervous system also may be affected, resulting in a headache associated with fever, aseptic meningitis, or encephalitis. Consult your health care provider if you have these symptoms. Health care providers may contact the Malheur County Health Department at 541-889-7279 for information on West Nile virus testing services that the Oregon Public Health Lab offers.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROVIDER

If you need this information in an alternate format, please call:

Health Department Phone (541) 889-7279 • Health Department Fax (541) 889-8468  
WIC Phone (541) 889-7041 • WIC Fax (541) 823-9400 • TTY 711

Emilio DeBess, D.V.M., M.P.V.M., Oregon Public Health veterinarian recommends the following simple precautions that can prevent the spread of West Nile virus:

- Eliminate sources of standing water that are a breeding ground for mosquitoes, including watering troughs, bird baths, clogged gutters, and old tires;
- Avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active;
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants in mosquito-infested areas;
- Use mosquito repellents containing DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or Picardin and follow the directions on the container;
- Make sure screen doors and windows are in good repair and fit tightly.

Additional information about West Nile virus is available at:

[public.health.oregon.gov/diseasesconditions/diseasesaz/Pages/disease.aspx?did=8](http://public.health.oregon.gov/diseasesconditions/diseasesaz/Pages/disease.aspx?did=8)

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