

COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1st Case of West Nile Virus Disease in a Montgomery County Resident

NORRISTOWN, PA—(July 22, 2008)— The Montgomery County Health Department was notified by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, which confirmed a 27-year-old Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County female has been infected with West Nile virus (WNV). The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Laboratories performed the test. This is the first human West Nile Virus case for 2008 for Montgomery County.

The Montgomery County Health Department and Department of Environmental Protection are currently analyzing the need for increased mosquito surveillance and control in the area where the Lower Merion female lives.

- **Serious Symptoms in a Few People.** About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.
- **Milder Symptoms in Some People.** Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected have symptoms such as fever, headache, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms can last for as short as a few days, though even healthy people have become sick for several weeks.
- **No Symptoms in Most People.** Approximately 80 percent of people (about 4 out of 5) who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms at all. (Source: CDC 2008)

MCHD has had **263** mosquito pools tested for WNV, with **1** testing positive in Norristown Municipality.

MCHD will **enhance** existing larvae and adult mosquito collections in the area where the WNV positive were found. Additional controls will be taken as needs are identified.

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To reduce your risk of contracting West Nile Disease here are some steps you can take:

- Make sure your gutters and drainpipes are clean and running freely.
- Check and repair windows and screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- Survey your property and remove containers that collect standing water such as: old tires, cans, bottles, buckets, toys, kiddie pools, pool covers, bird baths, flowerpots and empty plant containers.
- Avoid mosquito-breeding areas during peak periods of mosquito activity.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, making sure to cover feet and ankles.
- Apply insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin. **FOLLOW THE LABEL DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY.** Do **NOT** apply to face.
- **NEVER ALLOW CHILDREN TO APPLY REPELLENTS.** Parents should avoid applying repellents to the hands of children
- Repellents should NOT be applied to very young children (less than 3 years old).
- Discuss any concerns with your private physician.

For more information on WNV disease please contact the Montgomery County Health Department (610) 278-5117 or visit the Montgomery County Health Department Web Site: <http://health.montcopa.org>

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