

West Nile Virus Detected in Richardson Co

(KLZA)-- The Southeast District Health Department is warning the public that mosquitoes testing positive for West Nile Virus have been detected in Richardson County.

Richardson County is the fourth Nebraska county this year where infected mosquitoes have been discovered.

Southeast District Health Department Director Kevin Cluskey says people should do all they can to protect themselves from mosquito bites. Precautions include making sure doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night. You should also eliminate all sources of standing water where mosquitoes breed, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and other receptacles.

The Nebraska Department of Health has trapped more than 160,000 mosquitoes statewide already this year and more than a quarter of them have been infected with the West Nile Virus.

SEDHD officials said Thursday that the prime season for mosquitoes, is usually later in the summer. The heavy rains this spring has likely contributed to the large population of the pests.

With so many outdoor activities going on, Cluskey says it is a good idea to use insect repellent and dress appropriately when outside. Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. It is a good idea of consult a physician prior to using repellents with DEET on small children.

People over 50 years of age have the highest risk of developing a severe illness from mosquito bites.

People with mild infections may experience fever, headaches, body aches, skin rash and swollen lymph glands. More severe infection symptoms may include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, tremors and even possibly occasional convulsions and paralysis.

People can only become infected with West Nile Virus after being bitten by an infected mosquito. There is no evidence that people can get West Nile Virus from infected animals or people.

Many Signals Communications