



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

Department of Community Health and the Environment

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ST. CHARLES COUNTY OFFERS SERVICES, TIPS FOR CURTAILING MOSQUITOES, WEST NILE RISK

Experts Suggest Residents Also Take Steps to Protect Themselves

St. Charles County, Missouri – According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 48 states have reported West Nile virus infections in people, birds or mosquitoes this year (including cases here in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area). Since infected mosquitoes transmit this virus to humans, a joint effort between regional agencies and individual residents is necessary to reduce incidences of these insects and their bites

To help decrease the mosquito population in St. Charles County, staff from the Department of Community Health and the Environment inspects problem areas and applies control chemicals as needed. During these inspections, staff injects larvicide in pools of standing water where mosquitoes hatch to control the population before it develops, and spray trucks disperse small amounts of insecticide to reduce the number of adult insects. Residents who are concerned about mosquito populations in their area should call the Division of Environmental Health and Protection at (636) 949-1800 or visit the health department website, www.scchealth.org.

While the health department's efforts may reduce the number of mosquitoes in the community, individuals must take *personal responsibility* to protect themselves and their families. St. Charles County Vector Control Coordinator **Dr. Barry McCauley** says residents can discourage mosquitoes from biting by using an insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus whenever outdoors. When properly applied to exposed skin and clothing according to package instructions, products containing these active ingredients provide reasonably long lasting protection. In addition, the CDC recommends wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants when outside and checking window screens for potential damage. For additional tips on preventing insect bites, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/features/StopMosquitoes/>.

In addition — to eliminate potential breeding grounds — McCauley recommends residents:

- Fill in or drain areas where water may stand for more than one week
- Empty watering cans, wading pools and other water containers after using
- Completely seal cesspools and screen all vents
- Clean clogged roof gutters and drain flat roofs so no water stays
- Cover all standing receptacles, such as rain barrels in rural areas, with netting
- Stock garden pools and ponds with small fish or aerate them
- Tilt wheelbarrows and machines with containers to prevent holding water

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