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## **NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

#### **Nevada State Health Division West Nile Virus Update**

*Carson City* – The Nevada State Health Division is reporting five new human cases associated with West Nile Virus (WNV). Those individual cases are:

- Two Lyon County residents, both under 50 years of age; one with the more severe form of the disease and one with West Nile fever;
- One Lincoln County resident, over 50 years of age with West Nile fever;
- One Churchill County resident, under 50 years of age with West Nile fever;
- One Humboldt County resident, under 50 years of age with West Nile fever.

This brings the total number of human cases associated with West Nile Virus in Nevada to nine. Human case counts by county are:

- Lyon, 3
- Lincoln, 1
- Humboldt, 3
- Douglas, 1
- Churchill, 1

“As we continue to enjoy outdoor activities during the last days of summer, it’s important to remember that mosquitoes remain active in every county in our state – that means that West Nile Virus is still a threat to the public’s health,” said Dr. Bradford Lee, Nevada State Health Officer. “Now is the time to remain vigilant in practicing the preventive measures to reduce the chance of being bitten by mosquitoes. Remember to use mosquito repellent containing either DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, preferably in that order, wear long sleeve shirts, pants and socks, be aware that mosquitoes are most active during dusk and dawn, remove standing water from around your house and check to make sure the screens on your windows and doors fit properly.”

Historically, during the second year a state experiences West Nile Virus, the incidence of human infection tends to increase. “Fortunately, Nevada has not had many human cases this year, compared to our neighboring state, California, but the mosquito season is far from over,” Dr. Lee said. “While serious symptoms of WNV infection are more common in people 50 years and over, we have seen that three individuals under the age of 50 have developed the severe form of the disease. Prevention is the key to decrease your chance of being infected with West Nile Virus.”



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West Nile Virus most often is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are WNV carriers that become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite. West Nile Virus is **NOT** spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most people infected with WNV will not have any type of illness or symptoms. It is estimated that 20 percent of the people who become infected will develop West Nile fever. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness and body aches.

Approximately one in 150 persons (less than one percent) infected with WNV will develop a more severe form of the disease, West Nile encephalitis or meningitis. Symptoms of the more severe disease include severe headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis.

While there is no specific treatment for WNV infection, people who have been exposed to mosquitoes and experience symptoms of the more severe illness are encouraged to contact their health care provider immediately.

For more information about West Nile Virus, please access the following websites:

<http://health2k.state.nv.us>

<http://agri.state.nv.us>

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### **SPECIAL NOTE TO THE MEDIA:**

Telephone numbers to report sick/dead birds:

Department of Agriculture: 775-688-1182, Ext. 231

Clark County – West Nile Hotline: 702-759-1220

Carson City: 775-887-2190

Telephone numbers for public health questions:

Statewide: 1-888-608-4623

Washoe County: 775-328-2434

Carson City: 775-887-2190

Clark County – West Nile Hotline: 702-759-1220

Animal Health Questions:

Statewide: 775-688-1182, Ext. 232