

Alex Haartz, MPH
Administrator

Bradford Lee, M.D.
State Health Officer



Contact Name: Martha Framsted
Phone Number: 775-684-4014
Release Date: September 22, 2006
Page 1 of 2

NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

Nevada State Health Division Announces First Death Associated with West Nile Virus

Carson City – The Nevada State Health Division regrets to announce the first death associated with West Nile Virus. The individual was a resident of Elko County, over the age of 50.

As of September 22, 2006, statewide, the total number of human cases associated with West Nile Virus is 114.

Alex Haartz, Administrator, Nevada State Health Division said, "Since West Nile Virus was first detected in Nevada in 2003, there have been a total of 183 Nevadans that have been confirmed to be infected. Regrettably, while these individuals have become ill, we now report that a Nevadan has succumbed to the virus and is Nevada's first WNV death."

"Our thoughts are with the family during this difficult time," said Dr. Bradford Lee, Nevada State Health Officer. "This is a somber reminder of how dangerous this virus can be. We continue to strongly urge Nevadans 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."

"Mosquito season is not over," Dr. Lee continued. "While serious symptoms of WNV infection are more common in people 50 years and over, we have seen that several 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."

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.

(More)



Alex Haartz, Administrator

505 E. King Street, Room 201, Carson City, Nevada 89701-4797
Phone (775) 684-4200, Fax (775) 684-4211
NEVADA STATE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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>

###

SPECIAL NOTE TO THE MEDIA:

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