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## NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

### Nevada State Health Division Announces First Human Case of West Nile Virus in 2005

*Carson City* – The Nevada State Health Division is reporting one human case associated with West Nile Virus (WNV). The individual is under the age of 50 and is a Lyon County resident.

The Lyon County individual has the more severe form of the disease.

“West Nile Virus has been detected in mosquito pools, birds and one horse in Lyon County and a bird in Elko County,” said Dr. Bradford Lee, Nevada State Health Officer. “I cannot stress enough the importance of 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.”

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 serious symptoms of WNV are more common in people 50 years and over, this case shows that people under the age of 50 can also develop the severe form of the disease,” Dr. Lee said.

**(MORE)**



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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.

Dr. David Thain, Nevada State Veterinarian, continues to urge owners of horses, donkeys and mules to get their animals vaccinated. “While there isn’t a vaccine for humans, there is a vaccine available for horses, donkeys and mules. If you haven’t vaccinated your equines, you need to vaccinate them now.”

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