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Division of Public and Behavioral Health NEWS RELEASE

West Nile Virus Prevention Reminders

Carson City – Mosquito season and West Nile virus (WNV) continues in Nevada. Nevada usually sees WNV cases around mid-June through October. At this time, Nevada has had mosquitoes test positive in the following counties: Carson City, Churchill, Clark, Douglas, Elko, Humboldt, Lyon, Pershing, and Washoe. Thus far this year, **six** human cases have been reported (only three cases were reported statewide last year), but Nevada has seen cases every year since 2003. Every year varies, with cases having been as high as 124 reported in 2006 and as low as two in 2010. Most of Nevada is experiencing severe to exceptional drought. With fewer water sources, mosquitoes and animals are coming into closer contact as they are searching for water. As Nevadans enjoy being outside, it is important to remember easy ways to prevent being bitten by mosquitoes. The best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites. You can protect yourself and your family by:

- Use insect repellents when you go outdoors. Products containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol provide longer-lasting protection.
- If possible, wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors.
- For extra protection, spray your clothing with repellents containing permethrin.
- Take extra care from dusk to dawn, as these are peak mosquito biting hours.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitos out and use air conditioning if possible to avoid opening doors and windows.
- Empty standing water around your home (gutters, pet water dishes, tires, etc.) and keep pools clean on a regular basis.

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 infected with the virus.

For more information on WNV please visit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html> or call the Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health at 775-684-5911. For more information about the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, go to: <http://dpbh.nv.gov>.

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