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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

September 21, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT URGES PROTECTION FOLLOWING FIFTH CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS

DUPAGE COUNTY—The DuPage County Health Department announced on Thursday that there are now five human cases of West Nile virus (WNV) that have been reported in the county in 2017. The most recent case is a woman in her 80s from Wheaton.

“The recent warm weather that followed a cool spell may have caused some people to be less cautious. Please protect yourself and your family because the mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus are still active,” said Karen Ayala, Health Department Executive Director.

The Health Department is reminding residents to “Fight the Bite” and protect against mosquitoes by following the **4 Ds of Defense**:

- **Drain** standing water around your home and yard;
- **Defend** by using insect repellent containing DEET when outdoors;
- **Dress** with long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toe shoes when outside;
- Wear repellent from **Dusk to Dawn**, when mosquitoes are most active.

The Health Department’s Personal Protection Index (PPI) remains at Level 3 (high risk) because of the number of mosquito batches testing positive for WNV. Level 3 indicates high numbers of infected mosquitoes in most areas, and multiple human cases of WNV disease in DuPage County. View the PPI at dupagehealth.org.

The PPI provides a real-time snapshot of WNV activity, which ranges from Level 0 (zero) meaning no risk, to Level 3 announcing a high level of risk with multiple human cases of WNV. The PPI is updated every Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. throughout the WNV season.

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Approximately one in five people infected with WNV will develop symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Less than one percent will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues).

People over the age of 50, and those with certain medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, and organ transplants are at greater risk for serious illness.

Anyone who experiences symptoms that cause concern should contact their health care provider.

The Health Department continues to monitor WNV activity by collecting and testing mosquitoes from traps located throughout the county from May through October, the West Nile virus season.

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