

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
June 18, 2018

For More Information, Contact:  
Jenny Galbraith  
Division of Disease Control  
Phone: 701.328.2378  
E-mail: [jgalbraith@nd.gov](mailto:jgalbraith@nd.gov)

### **North Dakota Department of Health Reports First West Nile Virus Case This Season**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) has confirmed the first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) disease for the season. Additionally, a pool of mosquitos has tested positive for WNV in Grand Forks. “This first human infection is being reported earlier than what we usually see in North Dakota,” said Jenny Galbraith. “People need to take measures to avoid contracting the virus, by protecting themselves from mosquito bites,” Galbraith said.

The individual resides in Ramsey County and was not hospitalized for their illnesses. In 2017, the NDDoH received reports that 62 people had WNV. Over 35% of those cases resulted in hospitalizations, including two deaths.

The NDDoH recommends residents take these precautions to avoid mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellents containing ingredients registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (or PMD) or permethrin – and apply according to manufacturer’s instructions
- Wear protective clothing, such as long-sleeved shirts and pants
- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most likely to bite
- Eliminate stagnant water in containers around homes where mosquitoes can lay their eggs (such as buckets, flowerpots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths)
- Keep the grass around your home trimmed

The common symptoms of WNV include fever, headache, body aches and rash. People with more severe illness may experience symptoms such as stiff neck, confusion, paralysis, coma and even death. Fortunately, most people infected with WNV develop the less severe form of the disease or experience no symptoms at all.

For more information about West Nile virus, contact Jenny Galbraith, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378 or visit [www.ndhealth.gov/wnv](http://www.ndhealth.gov/wnv).

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600 E. Boulevard Ave. Dept. 301, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0200  
Phone: 701.328.2372 Fax: 701.328.4727 E-mail: [health@nd.gov](mailto:health@nd.gov)

*Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).*