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For Immediate Release  
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**Mosquitoes test positive for West Nile Virus**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) was notified of mosquitoes testing positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) in the health district. The pool of mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus was reported in Red Willow County. There have not been any mosquitoes that tested positive for WNV in the district since 2023, so SWNPHD recommends residents take precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

“This is a reminder for everyone to continue taking steps to prevent mosquito bites,” states Sarah Minnick, Program Manager at SWNPHD. “Mosquitoes in the area may potentially be carrying West Nile Virus and can pass it to humans. Most people are fine after catching West Nile, but some people will become severely ill.”

The incubation time for the development of symptoms of West Nile Virus can take anywhere from 3 days to 2 weeks after being bit by a mosquito. Around 8 out of 10 people who become infected with West Nile Virus will not experience any symptoms. Two in 10 people may experience symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, joint pain, rash, vomiting, and diarrhea. In severe cases, West Nile Virus can invade the brain and spinal cord leading to stiff neck, confusion, paralysis, coma, or death.

There is no treatment for West Nile Virus, so the best way to avoid becoming sick is to take action to prevent mosquito bites. This means wearing insect repellent and long shirts and pants, especially at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active. Check for standing water in yards and ditches. Drain water if possible or use mosquito dunks to kill mosquito larvae.

More information on West Nile Virus may be found at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov) or by calling SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. Information can also be found on SWNPHD’s Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

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