



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Mahoning County  
District Board of Health



**NEWS RELEASE**

<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</b>	<b>CONTACT:</b> Mary Helen Smith Environmental Health Director Mahoning County District Board of Health (330) 270-2855 ext. 2 mhsmith@mahoninghealth.org
	<b>DATE:</b> September 19, 2014

**Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported in Mahoning County**

Mahoning County’s first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) was reported to the Ohio Department of Health and to the Mahoning County District Board of Health today. The case involved a 66 year old Mahoning County resident who passed away, September 18, after being hospitalized with encephalitis. Earlier in the summer, one case of Lacrosse Encephalitis was also reported in Mahoning County.

Encephalitis is an inflammation of the brain that can occur when someone is bitten by an infected mosquito. There are three prevalent mosquito-borne viruses that cause encephalitis in Ohio. Lacrosse Encephalitis, usually an infection in young children, and St. Louis Encephalitis and West Nile Encephalitis which are often more serious diseases that affect older adults.

Approximately 80% of people who are infected with West Nile Virus do not show any symptoms at all, but there is no way to know in advance if you will develop an illness or not. Those who do develop symptoms usually do so between three to 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito. Early symptoms may include nausea, fever, vomiting, and headache.

“As mosquitoes are still active at this time of year, everyone should remain vigilant and take all reasonable precautions to protect themselves against mosquito bites and eliminate breeding sites,” said Patricia Sweeney, health commissioner of the Mahoning County District Board of Health.

Tips to avoid possible infection from mosquito bites:

- If you are outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active, be sure to wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, shoes and socks.
- Light colors are least attractive to mosquitoes.
- Use insect repellent and follow the label directions.

Tips to eliminate mosquito breeding sites near your home:

- Remove water-holding containers, such as tin cans and unused flower pots.
- Eliminate standing water.
- Make sure all roof gutters are properly draining and clean.
- Keep children’s wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren’t being used.

Learn more about the West Nile Virus on the ODH website at [www.odh.ohio.gov/wnv](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/wnv).

###

50 Westchester Drive  
Youngstown, OH 44515