

Test Results as of 9/22/06

New In This Update

- More birds and mosquito pools have tested positive for the presence of West Nile Virus. See “Mosquito Testing,” below.

Human Testing

- To date, 21 New Jersey residents have been approved for WNV testing. There are four positive human cases from Bergen, Essex, Middlesex, and Union counties; 13 have tested negative, two are pending results, and the samples have not yet been received for the other specimens. Blood and/or spinal fluid samples from these individuals were tested for the presence of WNV. These individuals either had symptoms or signs that met the established WNV testing criteria.
- Human testing for WNV is being conducted at the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services’ Public Health and Environmental Laboratory in Trenton and at public health labs in other states.

Avian Testing

- To date 178 birds have been submitted for testing by the Department of Health and Senior Services Public Health and Environmental Laboratory. Of those tested, 39 birds found in 13 counties have been confirmed positive for the presence of WNV. Positive birds have been found in Bergen (2), Camden (2), Essex (2), Gloucester (1), Hunterdon (1), Mercer (3), Monmouth (6), Morris (3), Ocean (15), Passaic (1), Somerset (1), Union (1), and Warren (1) counties.

Mosquito Testing

- To date, 3,716 mosquito pools have been tested for the presence of WNV, and 230 positive pools have been found in Bergen (55), Burlington (2), Camden (3), Cape May (1), Essex (6), Gloucester (2), Hudson (45), Hunterdon (12), Mercer (34), Middlesex (20), Monmouth (2), Morris (5), Ocean (1), Passaic (13), Salem (1), Somerset (7), Sussex (2), Union (16), and Warren (3) counties.

Horse Testing

- To date one horse from Middlesex County has tested positive for the presence of WNV. Equine testing is conducted by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture’s animal health laboratory in Trenton and positive results are sent to the National Veterinary Services Lab (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa for confirmation. For more information, visit the Department of Agriculture web site at www.state.nj.us/agriculture.

Additional Information & Advisories

- The risk of WNV infection has increased with the arrival of summer and people should take steps now to eliminate mosquito-breeding areas around their homes and protect themselves and their families from infection.
- Among the personal precautions residents can take now are such measures as eliminating standing water on their own property (such as clearing clogged gutters, draining flower pots, recycling old car tires, etc.), and repairing window and door screens. In the spring, summer, and fall residents can spray insect repellent on their clothing and exposed skin in accordance with labeling directions, wear long sleeved shirts and pants when outdoors, or curb outdoor activities at dawn, dusk and during the evening.
- The West Nile virus, an arboviral disease, is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. WNV is not directly transmitted from birds to humans. WNV infection generally causes no symptoms or just mild, flu-like symptoms; however, the elderly are at higher risk of more severe disease.
- In New Jersey, a total of 84 people have been diagnosed with WNV between 1999 and 2005. Lab testing confirmed WNV infection in these residents, with five resulting fatalities. WNV activity (identified from avian, equine and/or mosquito surveillance) has been detected in every county in New Jersey.
- New Jersey's WNV surveillance, control and prevention activities involve the coordinated efforts of a number of federal, state and local agencies. These include the New Jersey Departments of Health and Senior Services, Environmental Protection, and Agriculture, the CDC, the State Mosquito Control Commission, the Rutgers Mosquito Research and Control Unit, and local health and mosquito control agencies.

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