

BAY COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL

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Animal Control
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TOM HICKNER
County Executive

Press Release

Bay County Announces That Mosquito Sample Taken in Bangor Township Tests Positive for West Nile Virus

For Immediate Release: August 16, 2012

Contact: Bay County Mosquito Control, Thomas J. Putt or Mary J. McCarry, Phone: (989) 894-4555, FAX: (989) 894-0526

Bay County Mosquito Control found a sample of *Culex* species mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus (WNV) during the week of July 25 in Bangor Township. This is the first indication of WNV in Bay County this year, although West Nile Virus is well established throughout the state, and indeed, throughout the country. WNV is transmitted by infected mosquitoes. Nationwide this summer, 43 states have reported West Nile virus infections in people, birds, or mosquitoes. Michigan has reported twenty-four human cases with one fatality.

Bay County citizens do not need to panic about this information, but could participate in the West Nile Virus prevention effort by eliminating sources of stagnant water on their property and dumping water where possible to prevent mosquito eggs from hatching or larvae from developing into biting adults.

Bay County Mosquito Control (BCMC) has initiated additional larviciding to control immature mosquito stages and adulticiding to control adult female mosquitoes in the immediate area of the detection and will continue outward until the entire area has been treated and mosquito populations (as detected through

various traps) have dropped significantly. CDC traps and gravid traps will be utilized to collect adult mosquitoes throughout the area for testing purposes.

The easiest and best way to avoid West Nile virus is to prevent mosquito bites by doing the following:

- When you are outdoors, use insect repellent containing an EPA-registered active ingredient.
- Many mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. Be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours.
- Make sure you have good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.
- Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flower pots, buckets, and barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly. Drill holes in tire swings so water drains out. Keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used.
- Use fine mesh screen on the top of rain barrels to prevent female adults from reaching the water surface to lay eggs.

Citizens should call mosquito control at (989) 894-4555 to report dead crows or blue jays. The birds should be dead less than 24 hours and in good condition (no rotting odor or presence of maggots). **If you find a dead bird, don't handle the body with your bare hands.** Instead, always wear gloves or scoop the bird with a plastic shopping bag. Homeowners may dispose of other dead bird species either in an outside garbage can or by burying the bird.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit the following websites:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/q&a.htm>
- Michigan Department of Community Health <http://www.michigan.gov/mdch>
- Bay County Health Department <http://www.baycounty-mi.gov/Health/>

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