

Test Results as of 10/05/07

New In This Update

- The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services reported the first human case and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture announced the first equine case of West Nile virus (WNV). Additional birds and mosquito pools have tested positive for the presence of WNV.

Human Testing

- The first human case of WNV was identified this week in an 88 year old male from Middlesex County. The case developed symptoms in late August, was admitted to the hospital on 9/3 with encephalitis and remains hospitalized at this time.
- 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

- Four new positive birds have been reported this week.
- To date, 166 birds have been received for testing at the Department of Health and Senior Services Public Health and Environmental Laboratory. Of those tested, 40 birds found in Atlantic (3), Essex (2), Mercer (2), Middlesex (1), Monmouth (6), Morris (5), Ocean (14), Sussex (2) and Union (5) counties have been confirmed positive for the presence of WNV.

Mosquito Testing

- To date, 5,596 mosquito pools have been tested for the presence of WNV. Two hundred ninety-one (291) positive pools have been found as follows: Atlantic (8), Bergen (86), Camden (16), Cumberland (3), Essex (4), Gloucester (1), Hudson (64), Hunterdon (8), Mercer (29), Middlesex (22), Monmouth (8), Morris (5), Ocean (10), Passaic (10), Somerset (3), Sussex (1), Union (12), and Warren (1).

Horse Testing

- The first equine case of WNV was reported this week in an unvaccinated 21 year old mare from Ocean County. The horse became ill on 8/26 and was euthanized the following day.
- 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

- Given the unseasonably warm weather this fall, the risk of WNV infection remains and people should continue to take steps 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 89 people have been diagnosed with WNV between 1999 and 2006. 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 Center for Vector Biology, and local health and mosquito control agencies.

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