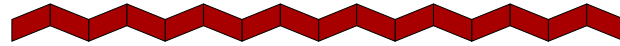




WEST NILE VIRUS MOSQUITO CONTROL



Safety and Security Fact Sheet

✓ **WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?**

West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne virus that can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of brain and spinal cord). The virus was first reported in the United States during summer 1999. It is thought to have been carried into this country by migratory birds.

✓ **HOW DO MOSQUITOES GET AND SPREAD WEST NILE VIRUS?**

Common house mosquitoes of Europe and North America (*Culex pipiens*) become infected with West Nile virus by biting birds that carry the virus. Humans and birds can become infected with the virus when bitten by infected mosquitoes.

✓ **MOSQUITOES ARE A PROBLEM AT MY SCHOOL. WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

If mosquitoes are a problem at school, make sure that no breeding sites exist on the school property. Mosquito breeding occurs during months with warm temperatures. Mosquitoes breed in still water. The most effective way to control mosquitoes is to eliminate any standing water where mosquito larvae can live. Check the school grounds for the following:

- Roof gutters and roof drains—Direct the building supervisor to check these areas regularly for standing water.
- Soda cans and other containers—Discard or recycle all cans and drink receptacles.
- Birdbaths—If the school has a nature area, clean and change the water in the birdbath every few days.
- Puddles and swampy areas—Drain the water. Submit a work order to have areas filled with clean soil.

✓ **THERE WAS A DEAD BIRD ON THE PLAYGROUND. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?**

Crows and blue jays belong to a family of birds that are particularly vulnerable to West Nile virus. It is not necessary to contact the health department. The dead bird should be picked up by a custodian with gloved hands or with a shovel, put in a double bag, and placed in the dumpster.

✓ **ONE OF THE CHILDREN HANDLED A DEAD BIRD. DOES HE OR SHE RISK EXPOSURE TO WEST NILE VIRUS?**

There is no evidence that West Nile virus is spread directly from dead birds to humans.

For more information, visit our web site, www.fcps.edu/fts/safety-security/factsheets/seh-8.pdf .
If you need assistance, call the safety section at 571-423-2010.