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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Two Human Cases of West Nile Virus are Confirmed**

#### *Being Proactive Can Prevent Bites and Illnesses*

**Oklahoma City, Okla.** – [Oklahoma City-County Health Department](#) (OCCHD) epidemiologists report two human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Oklahoma County of the mosquito season. WNV is the most common mosquito-borne disease in Oklahoma, and it's a deadly threat especially to Senior Adults. WNV symptoms include fever, headache, body ache and sometimes a rash.

Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected will display symptoms which can last for as short as a few days, though even healthy people have been sick for several weeks.

OCCHD Epidemiologist Eric Howard said, "People over the age of 50 are more likely to develop serious symptoms of WNV. Being outside means you're at risk – The more time you are outdoors, the more likely it is you could be bitten by an infected mosquito. Wearing repellent is sound way to protect against mosquito-borne illness."

Residents can [Fight the Bite](#) by using the 3-Ds and a P of mosquito safety:

1. DRAIN standing water on your property.
2. DEET containing insect repellent when outside. (Picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus)
3. DRESS in long sleeves and pants that have been sprayed with repellent.
4. PROTECT by limiting exposure outside and check window screens

By not taking the precautions mentioned above, Oklahomans put themselves at risk for mosquito-borne illness, such as WNV.

The best step in prevention is to remove any sources of stagnant water in kid's toys, old tires, pet bowls, buckets, chimeneas, flower pots, wheelbarrows and even birdbaths. Mosquito larvae can mature in extremely small amounts of water like that contained in a bottle cap. Survey your property after a rain to get rid of mosquito habitats.

OCCHD experts recommend using microbial larvicides commonly called dunks for standing water that cannot be drained as it kills larvae before they emerge as adult mosquitoes. The product can be found at most hardware and home improvement stores.

#### **About Oklahoma City-County Health Department**

Established in 1954, Oklahoma City-County Health Department (OCCHD) is committed to protecting health, promoting wellness and preventing disease to ensure a healthy future for the Oklahoma County-area community. OCCHD was one of the first public health departments in the nation to receive accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board. For more information, please visit [www.occhd.org](http://www.occhd.org).

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