



NEWS RELEASE

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West Nile virus death reported this season in Larimer County

Fort Collins, CO – The Larimer County Department of Health and Environment reports that a Fort Collins resident has died after contracting a neuroinvasive form of West Nile virus this year. This is the first fatal West Nile virus case in Colorado in 2017. Two of the four reported West Nile virus cases in Larimer County this year have been neuroinvasive cases.

While mosquito numbers are lower in September, mosquito infection rates can be high. Remember to protect yourself from mosquitoes until the first frost of the season.

West Nile disease is a viral infection which is spread to people by bites from infected *Culex* mosquitoes. Symptoms can range from none at all to severe illness. About 75% of people who are infected are asymptomatic; about 25% will develop West Nile fever. On average, less than 1% develop the more severe neuroinvasive form, which can lead to hospitalization, critical illness, chronic disability, or even death. Neuroinvasive West Nile infections can include meningitis, encephalitis, and paralysis.

West Nile Virus can be prevented. In addition to community efforts, such as larviciding, reducing water where mosquitoes can breed, and spraying for adult mosquitoes, individuals can remember to use the 4 D's to help prevent West Nile virus disease:

- **DEET or other effective mosquito repellent** - Use an EPA-registered mosquito repellent that has been **proven** to be effective against West Nile Virus-carrying mosquitoes. DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (also called p-menthane-3,8-diol or PMD) and IR3535 are good choices.
- **Dusk to Dawn** - Avoid exposure during peak *Culex* mosquito feeding times, from dusk through dawn.
- **Dress** - Wear long sleeves and pants to keep mosquitoes from biting.
- **Drain** – Remove standing water in your yard or garden to minimize mosquito breeding areas.

For more tips on what you can do to prevent West Nile virus, visit Larimer.org/westnile

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