



Leadership

Toni Preckwinkle
President
Cook County Board of Commissioners

Israel Rocha, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
Cook County Health
LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, MPH, MBA
Chief Operating Officer

Board of Directors

Lyndon Taylor
Chair of the Board

Hon. Dr. Dennis Deer, LCPC, CCFC
Vice Chair of the Board

Robert Currie
Raul Garza
Ada Mary Gugenheim
Joseph M. Harrington
Karen E. Kim, MD, MS

Mike Koetting
David Ernesto Munar
Heather M. Prendergast, MD, MS, MPH
Robert G. Reiter, Jr.
Otis L. Story, Sr.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 30, 2022

Media Contact: Kim Junius

Email: ccdphmedia@cookcountyhhs.org

First Human West Nile Virus Death in Cook County and Illinois for 2022

Public health officials urge residents to remain vigilant and “fight the bite” by following a few tips

FOREST PARK, Ill. – Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) has confirmed the first human West Nile virus-related death in suburban Cook County this year. A Cook County resident in his late 70s became ill during the first part of August and subsequently died. WNV was a contributing factor in the death. Laboratory testing at CDC has confirmed the diagnosis of WNV.

“The kids may be going back to school, but the mosquitoes are still out,” said CCDPH Chief Operating Officer Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck. “West Nile virus is a risk until the first hard frost, so we still need to take precautions, especially at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.”

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito. Common symptoms include fever, nausea, headache and muscle aches. Symptoms may last from a few days to a few weeks. However, 4 out of 5 people infected with West Nile virus will not show any symptoms. In rare cases, severe neuroinvasive illness including meningitis or encephalitis, or even death, can occur.

Last year there were 20 human West Nile virus cases, including 16 neuroinvasive cases and 1 death, in CCDPH’s jurisdiction of [suburban Cook County](#). People older than age 50 years and immuno-compromised individuals are at higher risk for severe illness. West Nile virus positive results in humans, birds, mosquitoes, and/or horses have been reported in 30 counties so far this year.

Fight the Bite: Practice the 3 R’s to prevent mosquito bites and the diseases they carry

- **Remove** – Eliminate opportunities for mosquitoes to breed outside your home. Once a week, dump water that is collecting outside in buckets, flowerpots, toys, kiddie pools, pet bowls, spare tires, etc. Keep gutters clean and free of debris.
- **Repel** – Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents when outdoors. Always follow the directions on the label. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Use air conditioning when possible.
- **Repair** – Keep mosquitoes outside. Make sure your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair any tears or other openings.

For more information, visit www.fightthebitecookcounty.com.

###