








## Avoid Bites

Avoid mosquito-breeding areas during peak periods of mosquito activity: dusk, dawn, and after the rain. Don't forget to:

-  Wear long sleeves and pants.
-  Wear closed shoes.
-  Avoid damp, grassy areas.
-  For children two months and older, apply an insect repellant according to label directions.

## Dead Bird Sightings

DEP coordinates the collection of dead bird specimens for possible testing. Species of interest include:

-  Crows
-  Blue jays
-  Birds of prey: owls, hawks, eagles

If a dead bird is found, please contact the local County WNV Coordinator, or visit [www.westnile.state.pa.us](http://www.westnile.state.pa.us). Dead birds can also be reported by calling 717-346-8243.

## Protecting Horses

Horses, like humans, are susceptible to WNV. Fortunately, there is a vaccine available to protect horses from the disease. Other small pets, like cats and dogs, may also contract the virus although it is very rare. Please contact a local veterinarian for more information.



## Mosquito Concerns or Complaints

Infestations of mosquitoes or standing water causing mosquito breeding can be reported on the WNV website.

For more about DEP's WNV program, please contact 717-346-8238 or visit [www.westnile.state.pa.us](http://www.westnile.state.pa.us)

For mosquito questions or concerns in the following counties, call:

Northumberland: 570-495-4665 x303  
Columbia and Montour: 570-4665 x307  
Snyder and Union: 570-4665 x307

**County Coordinator:** Brandon Ball  
**Phone Number:** (570) 495-4665 x303  
**Email Address:** [bball@nccdpa.org](mailto:bball@nccdpa.org)

Visit us online at: [www.nccdpa.org](http://www.nccdpa.org)



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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION



**NORTHUMBERLAND  
COUNTY**  
Conservation District

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## West Nile Virus Control Program



## Program Overview

The mission of the Pennsylvania West Nile Virus (WNV) Control Program is to reduce human exposure, health care costs, and the financial impact that a WNV outbreak would have upon Pennsylvanians and industries, such as agriculture, fishing, hunting, tourism, etc. The Pennsylvania departments of Health, Environmental Protection (DEP), and Agriculture have implemented a comprehensive strategy to prevent and control the seasonal impact of WNV.

The WNV strategy emphasizes mosquito control efforts, which rely on human, animal, and mosquito surveillance; a streamlined system for testing collected samples; and a public education program. The mosquito control efforts are focused on aggressive early season larviciding and appropriate adulticiding. Early and forceful mosquito abatement activities are necessary to prevent the seasonal amplification and spread of the virus.

## WNV Facts

- WNV is a mosquito-borne disease that can, in rare instances, causes encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain.
- Mosquitoes acquire the disease from feeding on infected birds. They transmit the virus by feeding on the next bird, animal, or person.
- This disease is not spread by person-to-person contact and there is no evidence that people can get the virus by handling infected animals.
- One in five people infected will develop a mild infection called West Nile fever; the symptoms include fever, headache, body aches, skin rash, and swollen lymph glands.
- One in 150 people infected will develop a severe infection called West Nile encephalitis; the symptoms include: fever, headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, and paralysis.
- Those infected with a mild infection often fully recover in a few days; however, symptoms of a severe infection can last several weeks.

- Neurological effects may be permanent and the infection can be fatal.
- There is no known treatment or vaccine.
- Transmission risk of WNV is greatest from July through September.

## PA History of WNV (since 2000)

- 495 people infected and 31 deaths
- 738 equine cases
- Over 2,750 infected dead birds
- Over 11,000 infected mosquito samples



## Reduce the Risk at Home



Mosquitoes need water to breed. *Culex pipiens* or the "Common House Mosquito" is closely associated with the transmission of WNV. This mosquito reproduces in stagnant, organic sources of water. It

flourishes in urban environments and needs as little as a tablespoon of water to reproduce. Residents should be mindful and eliminate standing water around their homes.

### Get rid of items that collect water

- Old tires, tin cans, buckets, and flowerpots
- Corrugated downspouts and gutters

### Keep puddles from forming

- Fill in ruts or low-lying areas.
- Repair leaky pipes or outdoor faucets.
- Clear drains and gutters of debris.
- Eliminate low spots that may collect water on pool covers, grill covers, and tarps.

## Stop stagnant water

- Change or empty the water in birdbaths and kiddie pools.
- Cover trash containers and recycle bins.
- Empty planters' drip trays.
- Fill in tree holes and stumps with sand.

### Don't forget:

- Keep grass cut short and bushes trimmed, reducing daytime resting areas.
- Repair windows and screens so mosquitoes cannot enter the home.
- Store wheelbarrows upside down.

## Home Products

When dumping or draining water sources is not possible, a safe way to kill mosquito larvae is the use of *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti). Bti is a naturally occurring soil bacterium used to kill mosquito larvae. It is widely available at home improvement stores and can be safely used around the home. Bti can be purchased in small, donut-shaped form, often called "mosquito dunks," which are useful in small areas of standing water, such as a birdbath or small puddle of water that may gather in a low spot on the property. A granular form of Bti is available and effective for larger areas, such as backyard ponds. Bti is safe to use and kills only mosquito and black fly "gnat" larvae. It is not harmful to people, pets, aquatic life (such as fish) or plants. Please follow label directions when using any pesticide.

