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WEST NILE VIRUS DETECTED IN SAGINAW COUNTY MOSQUITOES

Saginaw, MI – Routine surveillance conducted by the Saginaw County Mosquito Abatement Commission (SCMAC) has identified the first detection of West Nile virus activity in Saginaw County for the 2026 season. West Nile virus (WNV) was detected in three separate mosquito samples collected in the last week of July and the first week of August. Although the current risk to residents is low, SCMAC encourages the public to take steps to prevent mosquito bites.

Recommended Mosquito Bite Prevention Measures

- Remove standing water from around your property, including water in containers, wading pools, tires, and other items that collect water. Report standing water in ditches, flooded yards, or fields to SCMAC.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long-sleeved shirts when outdoors; light-colored clothing is recommended.
- Use insect repellents with EPA-approved ingredients as directed. Consult a physician before applying repellent to infants.
- Limit outdoor activity during peak mosquito hours (dusk to dawn).
- Ensure window and door screens are intact and fit tightly. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes. Close doors and windows at night when possible.

WNV is commonly found in mosquitoes and birds (transmission cycle) in Michigan by mid-summer and often increases as the summer extends into September. This virus amplifies in the environment as temperatures increase and mosquitoes continue to feed on birds, the host of WNV. *Culex* mosquitoes are the primary culprit responsible for amplifying and transmitting this disease and can be found in multiple standing water habitats common throughout communities; artificial containers, ditches, stormwater drains, buckets, scrap tires, etc.

SCMAC continues comprehensive mosquito control operations targeting the *Culex* mosquito populations throughout the season, focusing on the above habitats conducting larval and adult control activities. Our website, saginawmosquito.com, notes where daily community control is occurring and information related to our services.

Mosquito-borne viruses can spread when a mosquito becomes infected after feeding on an infected bird or mammal and then bites a human. Most human infections show no symptoms. When illness does occur, symptoms usually include sudden flu-like

illness and fever. Severe, though rare, cases may involve neurological complications such as meningitis or encephalitis requiring hospitalization.

SCMAC will continue monitoring mosquito-borne viruses through the end of September. Residents are encouraged to reduce exposure to mosquitoes and report any crow or blue jay found dead within the past 24 hours, as these birds are valuable for West Nile virus surveillance.

For more information about SCMAC programs and services, visit saginawmosquito.com or call (989) 755-5751.