



Public Health
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**Peoria City/County
Health Department**

Media Release

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To: All Media

From: Peoria City/County Health Department
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For Immediate Release

Mosquitoes and Floodwater

The Peoria City/County Health Department would like to remind citizens of the large numbers of floodwater mosquitoes (*Aedes vexans* and other species) that appear about two weeks after heavy rains and flooding. Floodwater mosquitoes are a nuisance but are not usually a disease carrying mosquito. Floodwater mosquitoes are rarely infected with the disease causing West Nile virus (WNV).

Rather than focus on addressing nuisance floodwater mosquitoes, the Peoria City/County Health Department recommends that homeowners begin to target the primary vector of WNV, the house mosquito (*Culex pipiens*), for prevention of WNV. WNV is a mosquito-borne disease that can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord). WNV infection is transmitted through a mosquito bite to people, other birds, and animals after the mosquitoes feed on birds that are infected.

As floodwater recedes and hot weather approaches, pockets of standing water can create stagnant water pools that produce large numbers of *Culex house* mosquitoes that can carry WNV. Homeowners should focus on removing catch basins, ditches and “old” water impoundments that may produce breeding grounds for spring and summer house mosquitoes. In rural areas, the use of insect repellents and other personal precautions may be the only practical methods for preventing mosquito bites.

Precautions include:

- Avoiding being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn,
- Wearing shoes and socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and applying insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535, according to label instructions, when outdoors,
- Making sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens, repairing or replacing screens that have tears or other openings, and trying to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night,
- Eliminating all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding, including water in bird baths, ponds, flowerpots, wading pools, old tires and any other receptacles, and
- Cleaning clogged roof gutters.

For more information on WNV, call the Peoria City/County Health Department at 679-6161. For other information on public health issues, visit our website at www.pcchd.org.

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