



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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WEST NILE VIRUS PREVENTION AND CONTROL EFFORTS CONTINUE

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health is continuing preventive measures to suppress mosquito activity in and around Kahului Airport on Maui. After the airport closes at 11 p.m. this evening, DOH personnel will spray the terminal and surrounding areas within a one-mile radius of the airport. Personnel will repeat this procedure again on Thursday night.

The current mosquito suppression activity is in response to findings of preliminary positive results for West Nile Virus from testing of blood from a live sparrow collected at Kahului Airport. Samples have been sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for confirmation and results are expected soon.

The public is asked to assist in dead bird surveillance by reporting dead birds to 211 and picking up, double bagging and dropping off freshly dead birds at designated sites statewide. Those dead birds are then collected for testing at the State Laboratory. A complete list of collection sites is available at www.hawaii.gov/health or call 211 for further information.

“Dead bird testing is one of the most important ways we can identify if West Nile virus is indeed in Hawaii. We need the public’s help in dropping off freshly dead birds at designated sites, as our staff continues mosquito suppression activity,” said Dr. Paul Effler, DOH State Epidemiologist.

Kahului Airport and Honolulu International Airport have been identified as high priority areas of WNV surveillance due to higher level of cargo traffic than on other islands. Both airports initiated WNV prevention programs within a two-mile radius of the airports that include treating all storm

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drains with larvacide and a door-to-door project to educate businesses and residents on how they can help keep WNV out of Hawaii.

To date, Hawaii has been West Nile Virus free despite the disease occurring on the Mainland for the last five years.

The residents are being asked to eliminate standing water from their property to get rid of places mosquito can breed. Mosquitoes need only a small amount of water in which to breed. Protective measures include turning over or disposing of containers that collect water, cleaning out gutters, and fixing leaky faucets.

West Nile Virus is a disease that is usually passed between mosquitoes and birds, but it can also affect humans, horses, and other vertebrates. Most people who are bitten by an infected mosquito will show no symptoms. The majority of those that do display symptoms will have West Nile fever, a mild disease characterized by flu-like symptoms, which typically lasts a few days. Physicians and veterinarians statewide have been notified to be alert to symptoms and report any unusual activity.

Until the summer of 1999, when it was found in New York City, WNV had not been detected in the Western Hemisphere. Since then, it has affected humans, birds, horses, and other vertebrates in most of the mainland United States, as well as Canada and Mexico. Last year, 45 states and Washington D.C. reported nearly 10,000 human cases of WNV, resulting in 264 deaths.

For more information, visit the Department of Health web site at www.hawaii.gov/health or consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) site at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm.

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For more information, contact:
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West Nile Virus Information for Maui

- The public is urged to call 2-1-1 to get information on where they can turn in dead birds for testing or get more information on West Nile Virus.
- All other questions should be directed to the Maui District Health Office, Hawaii State Department of Health @ 984-8213.

- Collecting dead birds is the best way to indicate the presence of WNV. Dead bird drop-off locations are as follows:

Lahaina Base Yard (County of Maui)
3310 Honoapiilani Highway
Lahaina 96761
661-0501
(Hours: Weekdays 7 - 11 am and 12 - 3 pm)

Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW)

685 Haleakala Way
Kahului 96732
873-3500 or 873-3510

Department of Health District Health Laboratory
Wailuku Health Center
121 Mahalani Street
Wailuku 96793
984-2131
(Hours: Weekdays 7:45 am - 4:30 pm)

(Hours: M – F, 7:00 am – 3:00 pm)

Makawao Base Yard (County of Maui)
1295 Makawao Avenue
(Across from St. Joseph's Church)
Makawao 96768
572-7272
(Hours: Weekdays 7 am - 12 noon and 1 pm - 3 pm)

Maui Humane Society

Mokulele Highway (at Mehameha Loop)
(halfway between Puunene & Piilani Hwy)
Puunene 96784
877-3680

- Reduce exposure to mosquitoes by applying insect repellent containing DEET, removing standing water from around your home, repairing any screen doors or windows that are torn or broken, removing debris that can collect water and, when possible, wearing long sleeve shirts and long pants when outdoors.
- Please report any horse illness to your veterinarian immediately.
- For more information log on to the Hawaii State Department of Health website at www.hawaii.gov/health or the Centers for Disease control at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile>.