

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POINTER



AUGUST 2023

WEST NILE VIRUS



OVERVIEW OF WEST NILE VIRUS

West Nile Virus (WNV) is the most common mosquito-borne disease in the United States ([CDC, 2023](https://www.cdc.gov/westnilevirus/)). Certain mosquitoes can become vectors for West Nile Virus (WNV) after they feed on an infected bird. Those infected mosquitoes become carriers of the virus and can pass it to people and animals by biting them.

While most people who become infected with WNV will not develop any symptoms, those who do can experience fever, headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, and rashes. Although most people recover fully from these symptoms, 1 in 150 can develop severe illnesses that affect the central nervous system, which can cause paralysis or even death ([Ada County Mosquito Abatement District, n.d.](https://www.adacounty.gov/health-services/mosquito-abatement/)).

HOW CAN I PREPARE MY HOME AND FAMILY FROM MOSQUITOES THAT CARRY WNV?



Drain Dress Defend

The [Ada County Mosquito Abatement District](https://www.adacounty.gov/health-services/mosquito-abatement/) provides the following tips to prepare your home and protect your family from mosquitoes that carry WNV:

- **DRAIN** all standing water from objects on your property that may serve as a breeding ground for mosquitoes.
- **DRESS** appropriately by wearing light-colored, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- **DEFEND** against mosquito bites by using DEET, or other EPA-approved mosquito repellents to protect uncovered skin.

- Avoid overwatering your lawn and landscape.
- Clean or drain livestock watering tanks every week or use an inexpensive mosquito dunk to control mosquitoes. The mosquito dunk is non-toxic to animals.
- Avoid being active from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Report any abandoned swimming pools in your neighborhood. Water can collect in the pool and become a prime mosquito breeding location.
- Prevent household places from accumulating water, including potted plants, pool/spa covers and bird baths.
- Stock your ornamental pond with mosquito fish, koi and/or goldfish. Ponds with healthy, hungry fish will eat most mosquito eggs, larvae and pupae.
- Thin out pond lilies or other vegetation, and fully drain your pond for cleaning.
- Replace broken screens and doors to keep mosquitoes outside.

So far this year, the Ada County Mosquito Abatement District (ACMAD) has collected and tested 45 samples with mosquitoes that were positive for WNV. The ACMAD tracks mosquitoes in 160 different surveillance sites throughout Ada County. Click this link to view their map, which shows where mosquitoes with WNV have been found recently: <https://gisprod.adacounty.id.gov/arcgis/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a50e684ba3714de8ae68cb8b8262fcf7>



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