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Ohio's First 2 Human Cases of West Nile Virus in 2015 **Reported in Cuyahoga and Hamilton Counties**

ODH Urges Precautions to Prevent Mosquito-borne Diseases

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Ohio's first two human cases of West Nile virus in 2015 have been reported in a 34-year-old Cuyahoga County man with a febrile illness (fever), and a 77-year-old Hamilton County man with encephalitis. Ohio reported 11 human cases of West Nile virus in 2014.

The primary way people get West Nile virus is through the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people who become infected with West Nile virus do not have any symptoms. About one in five people who become infected develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Less than 1 percent of infected people develop a serious neurologic illness, such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues).

"Ohio's wet summer has caused standing water in many areas of Ohio, and mosquitoes breed and multiply in such water," said ODH Medical Director Dr. Mary DiOrio. "Ohioans should take reasonable precautions to avoid mosquito bites and eliminate potential mosquito breeding sites."

Here are some tips to avoid mosquito bites:

- If you are outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active, be sure to wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, shoes and socks.
- Wear light-colored clothing, which is less attractive to mosquitoes.
- Use EPA-registered mosquito repellent and follow the label directions.
- Install or repair screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out of your home.

Here are some tips to eliminate mosquito breeding sites around your home:

- Eliminate standing water.
- Empty or remove water-holding containers, such as buckets, unused flower pots and bird baths.
- Make sure all roof gutters are clean and draining properly.
- Keep child wading pools empty and on their sides when not being used.

Learn more about mosquitoes and West Nile virus on the ODH website at www.odh.ohio.gov/wnv.

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